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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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"What is and What Might be."

ONE of the privileges and delights of this, our age, with its early rays of the new spiritual dawn, is to find the inspiration of the coming Creator breaking through the darkness, and shining, now here, now there, in some well tried and responsive human heart. Such we always look for, seeking to note the least glimmer in the darkness, and, when we find them, we welcome them with joy. And a part of our delight and inspiration is, that we can never foretell in what region or in what guise the light may shine forth; it takes ever unexpected and unprecedented forms, breaking forth in unanticipated beauty, like the spring flowers which succeed each other, each one different, yet all equally lovely and all breathing joy.

We are all so deeply indebted to the Author of *The Creed of Christ* and *The Creed of Buddha,* for the fine inspiration, lucidity and cogency of those two wonderful books, which we at once recognized as authentic, clear rays of the coming dawn, that the coming of a new book of his is necessarily an event. The new book, which we greet with confident hope, bears the title which has been used as the general heading for the present notes: *What is and What Might Be;* and to this the sub-title is added: "A study of education in general and elementary education in particular." The book is made more than commonly interesting, because it gives us the name, hitherto withheld, of the Author of the two *Creeds,* Edmond G. A. Holmes, to whom are accredited also two volumes of verse: *The Silence of Love* and *The Triumph of Love.* That the Author of the *Creeds* should write a book on elementary education, is further explained by the fact, set forth on the cover, that Mr. Holmes was, until lately, the Chief Inspector of Elementary Schools in England; a post, if we mistake not, very similar to that held for several years by Matthew Arnold.

When a writer, accredited with two wonderful books on Christianity and Buddhism, two volumes of verse, full of inspiration, fineness of spirit, and beautiful workmanship, and further critical works of high distinction, undertakes to write of elementary education, we prepare ourselves for a work of technical accuracy, it is true, but also for a work which shall be very much more than a monograph of pedagogy. We look forward to finding the simplest facts treated in relation to the deepest principles, we prepare ourselves to see the teaching of children, not dryly and narrowly discussed, but rather viewed, in the fine phrase of the French critic, "under the aspect of Eternity."

With some such expectation we opened Mr. Edmond Holmes' new book. And we were in no wise disappointed. On every page, we found, side by side with the technical mastery of the Chief Inspector of Elementary Schools, the piercing wisdom of the Author of the *Creeds,* touched with the poet's inspiration and feeling for beauty. So true, indeed, is this, that our one misgiving, while reading the book, was, whether the British reader, never very hospitable to wide philosophical ideas, may regard with distrust a work on education which is so evidently inspired. Were Saint Paul to write on politics, or Saint John on art, they would, we fear, be regarded by the British public with something of apprehension and dismay.

Our misgiving, above adverted to, is sensibly strengthened, when, in the Preface, we find our Author declaring that his aim, in writing this book, is "to show that the *externalism* of the West, the prevalent tendency to pay undue regard to outward and visible 'results,' and to neglect what is inward and vital, is the source of most of the defects that irritate Education in this country, and therefore that the only remedy for those defects is the drastic one of changing our standard of reality and our conception of the meaning and value of life." We think that we can realize the blank misgivings of the British paterfamilias with a citizen's proper interest in elementary education, when he is asked, as a condition precedent to certain practical reforms, to "change his standard of reality, and his conception of the meaning and value of life." And we cannot imagine his misgivings abated, when, a few lines farther down, he meets the suggestion that not only the elementary school teacher, but he himself, even he, the British paterfamilias, is "deeply tainted with the virus of 'Occidentalism' "; when he finds an Author laying the blame of the failures of our educators to which he draws our attention "on the hostile forces which have been too strong for many of them,—on the false assumptions of Western philosophy, on the false standards and false ideals of Western civilization, on various 'old, unhappy, far-off things,' the effects of which are still with us, foremost among them being that deadly system of 'payment by results' which seems to have been devised

for the express purpose of arresting growth and strangling life, which bound us all, myself included, with links of iron, and which has many zealous agents, of whom I, alas! was one."

Now the British paterfamilias is deeply convinced that "payment by results" is the foundation stone of all respectable life, on which he, too, is based; for is not he himself paid by results, according to the measure of his excellent virtues of honesty, energy and plodding persistency? Who hits at "payment by results" hits at the stout figure of the British paterfamilias, who, we can conceive, will be at least tempted to hit stoutly back. Nor will his confidence, thus roughly shaken, be more likely to recover balance, when, in remedy for the many ills wrought in education by "the virus of Occidentalism," he is invited to behold, admire and emulate the ideal system of a certain village which our Author calls Utopia, even though in the same breath we are informed that "it is not an imaginary village—a village of Nowhere—but a very real village, which can be reached, as all other villages can, by rail and road. It nestles at the foot of a long range of hills; and if you will climb the slope that rises at the back of the village, and look over the level country that you have left behind, you will see in the distance the gleaming waters of one of the many seas that wash our shores. The village is fairly large, as villages go in these days of rural depopulation; and the school is attended by about 120 children. The head teacher whose genius has revolutionized the life, not of the school only, but of the whole village, is a woman. I will call her Egeria."

In imagination, we can hear the British paterfamilias snorting like a surprised rhinoceros who scents an enemy behind the reeds: "Utopia! Egeria!" and then (recalling that, on the title page, our Author confesses himself a writer of sonnets), throwing up his stout hands in dismay, thereby letting this treatise fall upon the floor, where he leaves it, distrustingly, fearing to go further in such subversive doctrine. We hold, therefore, that this book, with its condemnations of "the virus of Occidentalism," its nymph Egeria, its Utopian villages, is indeed no book for the British paterfamilias; unless, indeed, he shall happen to have been indoctrinated with the Bhagavad Gita, with its reprehension of those who work for "results."

Being ourselves admirers of that old Indian book, we find much for our hearts and spirits in this newer treatise; and, since it cannot evidently be treated as a simple monograph on Education, elementary or otherwise, we venture to put that view of it for the present aside, and to take the book along the line of what we like; returning, perchance, to its educational side later on.

If we let ourselves fall a-dreaming about the book, our dream would be somewhat thus: Ages ago, there was, in the holy land of Bharata, a certain one, who, after many earth-lives spent in the search for wisdom, was born in the Ganges valley, and came to be a disciple of Siddhartha the Compassionate. Soaking the very fibres of his spirit in the teaching of the Buddha, he deeply felt its beauty and clear light, and the splendor of the promise that Master of Masters held out for the soul in its perplexed, wonderful quest: thereafter, true to the light and law of the Buddha, that wandering soul found its way to Palestine, and hearkened to the teachings of the younger Master, who was even then pouring forth the heart of his love for mankind, and searing with his fine irony the hard hearts of Pharisee and Sadducee.

Then, in fulness of time, that same soul came to birth in England, and through the inscrutable working of Karma's law came in due time to be a visitor of establishments of learning, one commissioned by Higher Powers to supervise, to command, to report, to make generalizations: in a word, a Chief Inspector of Elementary Schools. Then, after a time, such a one, having borne the burden of toilsome years, came once more upon the lore of Siddhartha, thrilled to the echo of the holy Law, and, growing indignant at the Law's travesty, set himself to write *The Creed of Buddha.* Thereafter, in the light of the Eastern Wisdom, re-reading the teaching of the Galilean Master, and bringing his thoughts thereon to a focus in *The Creed of Christ.* Finally, as his school work neared its end, gathering together his thoughts on life and man, and, with the unconquerable original bent which his mind had received from the great Siddhartha, recording his conclusions in some such book as this: *What is and What Might Be.*

This may indeed be the genesis of the work; and, taking it to be such, we are led inevitably to consider in it first the things which show the Author's world-view, that Far-Eastern outlook upon life which must come from far-off tribes in ancient lands. Most perfectly, perhaps, is our Author's ideal summed up in such a passage as this: "At the end of the last section I asked myself what was the ethical ideal of the life of self-realization,—the positive ideal as distinguished from the more negative ideal of emancipating from egoism and sensuality. I will now try to answer this question. Emancipation from egoism and sensuality is effected by the outgrowth of a larger and truer self. This larger and truer self, as it unfolds itself, directs our eyes towards the ideal self—the goal of the whole purpose of growth—which is to the ordinary self what the full-grown oak-tree embodying in itself the perfection of oak-hood, is to the sapling oak; or what the ripe peach, embodying in itself the perfection of peachhood, is to the green, unripened fruit. The ideal self is, in brief, perfect Manhood. What perfect Manhood may be, we

need not pause to imagine. Whatever it may be, it is the true self of each of us. It follows that the nearer each of us gets to it, the nearer he is to the true self of each of his fellow-men; that the more closely he is able to identify himself with it, the more closely he is able to identify himself with each of his fellow-men; that in realising it he is realising, he is entering into, he is becoming one with, the real life of each of his fellow-men. And not of each of his fellow-men only. He is also entering into the life of the whole community of men—(for it is the presence of the ideal self in each of us which makes the communal life possible)—and, through this, of each of the lesser communities to which he may happen to belong. In other words, he is losing himself in the lives of others, and is finding his well-being, and therefore his happiness, in doing so. But self-loss, with joy in the loss of self, is, in a word, *love.*"

This is the very inspiration, the very speech, almost, of the greater Upanishads. Atma is the ideal self, of thee and me and of these; as we find Atma within ourselves, and enter deeper into Atma, we find our immortal being, and the immortal being of all, of me and of thee, and of these. Thereafter finding Atma in all, and all in Atma, we banish fear and enter into joy. By a strange contradiction, such words as those of our Author concerning the communal life, the life of the whole community of men, are often used to bolster up the fallacies of Socialism. It is well, then, to make quite clear what our Author thinks of these same fallacies: "With their social ideal, regarded as an ideal, one has of course the deepest sympathy. Their motto is, I believe, 'Each for all, and all for each'; and if this ideal could be realised, the social millenium would indeed have begun. But in trying to compass their ends by legislation, *before the standard of reality has been changed,* they are making a disastrous mistake. For, to go no further, our schools are hot-beds of individualism, the spirit of 'competitive selfishness' being actively and systematically fostered in all of them, with a few exceptions; and so long as this is so, so long as our highly individualised society is recruited, year by year, by a large contingent of individualists of all ranks, drawn from schools of all grades, for so long will the Socialistic ideal remain an impracticable dream. An impracticable and a mischievous dream; for in the attempt to realise it, the community will almost inevitably be brought to the verge of civil war. When the seeds of Socialistic legislation, or even of socialistic agitation, are sown in a soil which is highly charged with the poison of individualism, the resulting crop will be class hatred and social strife.

"No, we must change our standard of reality before we can hope to reform society. Where the outward standard prevails, where material possessions are regarded as 'the good things of life,' the basis of society must needs be competitive rather than communal, for there will never

be enough of those 'good things' to satisfy the desires of *all* the members of any community. And even if the socialistic dream of state-ownership could be universally realised, the change—so long as the outward standard of reality prevailed—would not necessarily be for the better, and might well be for the worse. Competition for 'the good things of life' would probably go on as fiercely as ever; but it would be a scramble among nations rather than individuals, and it might conceivably take the form of open warfare waged on a titanic scale. Even now there are indications that such a struggle, or series of struggles, if not actually approaching, is at any rate not beyond the bounds of possibility. And on the way to the realisation of the collectivist ideal, we should probably have in each community a similar struggle for wealth and power among political parties,—a struggle which would generate many social evils, of which civil war might not be the most malignant." Which strongly supports the contention, so often made in these pages, that, whatever be the spirit of Socialist theory, that of common Socialist practice and propaganda is the spirit of envy, hatred and all uncharitableness. The brotherhood which it effectively forwards, is a brotherhood of Cain and Abel.

But to return from this thorny by-path to the main highway of our Author's work. Writing of the religious aspect of the realisation of the Self, he says: "The oak-tree is present in embryo in the acorn. What is it that is present in embryo in the new-born child? To achieve salvation is to realise one's true self. But what is one's true self? The perfection of manhood is an obvious answer to this question; but it explains so little that we cannot accept it as final. We may, however, accept it as a resting-place in our search for the final answer.

"It is on the religious aspect of self-realisation that I now propose to dwell. The function of Religion is to bring a central aim into man's life, to direct his eyes towards the true end of his being and to help him to reach it. The true end of Man's being is the perfection of his nature; and the way to this end is the process which we call growth. When I speak of Man's nature I am thinking of his universal nature, of the nature which is common to all men, the nature of Man as Man. Each of us has his own particular nature, his individuality, as it is sometimes called. The nature of Man as Man is no mere common measure of these particular natures, but is rather what I may call their organised totality, the many-sided nature which includes, explains, and even justifies them all.

"What perfection may mean when we predicate the term of our common nature, we cannot even imagine. The potentialities of our nature seem to be infinite, and our knowledge of them is limited and

shallow. When we compare an untutored savage or a brutal, ignorant European with a Christ or a Buddha, or again with a Shakespeare or a Goethe, we realise how vast is the range—the lineal even more than the lateral range—of Man's nature, and we find it easy to believe that in any ordinary man there are whole tracts, whole aspects of human nature, in which his consciousness has not yet been awakened, and which therefore seem to be non-existent in him, though in reality they are only dormant or inert. These, however, are matters with which we need not at present concern ourselves. Let the potentialities of our common nature be what they may. Our business is to realise them as, little by little, they present themselves to us for realisation. Let the end of the process of growth be what it may. Our business is to grow.

"In the effort to grow we are not left without guidance. The stimulus to grow, the forces and the tendencies that make for growth, all come from within ourselves. Yet it is only to a limited extent that they come under our direct control. So, too, the goal of growth, the ideal perfection of our nature, is our own; and yet on the way to it we must needs outgrow ourselves. What part do *we* play in this mighty drama? The mystery of selfhood is unfathomable. The word *self* changes its meaning the moment we begin to think about it. So does the word *nature*. The range of meaning is in each case unlimited. Yet there are limits beyond which we cannot use either word without risk of being misunderstood. When we are meditating on our origin and our destiny, some other word seems to be needed to enable us to complete the span of our thoughts.

"Is not that word *God?* The source of our life, the ideal end of our being,—how shall we think about these if we may not speak of them as *divine?* And in using the word 'divine,' do we not set ourselves free to stretch the respective meanings of the words 'self' and 'nature' beyond what would otherwise have been the breaking point of each? The true self is worthier of the name of 'self' than the apparent self. The true nature is worthier of the name of 'nature' than the lower nature. But the true self is the Divine Self; and the highest nature is the Nature of God. If this is so, we serve God best and obey God best by trying to perfect our nature in response to a stimulus, a pressure, and a guidance which is at once natural and divine.

"In other words, we serve God best by following the path of self-realisation. And the better we serve God, the more truly and fully do we learn to know him. If to know him, and to live up to our knowledge of him, is to be truly religious, then the life of self-realisation is, in the

truest and deepest sense of the word, a *religious* life. Or rather, it is the only religious life, for in no other way can knowledge of God be won. . . .

. . . "The highest of all senses is the religious sense, the sense which gives us knowledge of God. But the religious sense is not, as we are apt to imagine, one of many senses. No one individual sense, however 'massive' or subtle it might be, could enable its possessor to get on terms, so to speak, with the totality of things, with the all-vitalising Life, with the all-embracing Whole. *The religious sense is the well-being of the soul.* For the soul as such grows in and through the growth of its various senses,—its own growth being reinforced by the growth of each of these when Nature's balance is kept, and retarded by the growth of one or more of them when Nature's balance is lost,—and in proportion as its own vital, central growth is vigorous and healthy, its power of apprehending reality unfolds itself little by little. That power is of its inmost essence. When reality, in the full sense of the word, is its object, it sees with the whole of its being; it is itself, when it is at the centre of its universe, its own supreme perceptive faculty, its own religious sense. . . .

. . . "Knowledge of God, being a state or attitude of the soul as such, must show itself in the right bearing and the right action of the soul as such, in other words, of Man as Man. . . . Now Man as Man has to bear himself aright towards the world in which he finds himself, and in particular towards the world which touches him most closely and envelopes him most completely,—the world of human life. Therefore, knowledge of God will show itself, principally and chiefly, though by no means wholly, in dealing aright with one's fellow-men, in being rightly disposed towards them, and in doing the right things to them. I have found it convenient to disconnect the moral from the religious aspect of self-realisation. We can now see that in the last resort the two aspects are one.

"From every point of view, then, and above all from that of Religion, the path of self-realisation is seen to be the path of salvation. For it is the only scheme of life which enables him who follows it to attain to knowledge of God; and a knowledge of God has, as its necessary counterpart, a right attitude, in general, towards the world which surrounds him, and in particular towards his fellow-men.

"But is it possible, within the limits of one earth-life, to follow the path of self-realisation to its appointed goal? And if not, will the path be continued beyond that abrupt turn in it which we call death? . . . Those who walk in the path of self-realisation, and whose answering

loyalty to Nature is rewarded by some measure of insight into her deeper laws, know that the goal of the path is far away. . . . And the higher they ascend, the more vividly do they realise how unimaginably high above them is the summit of the mountain which the path is ascending in spiral coils. . . .

. . . "The inference to be drawn from these significant facts is that the apparent limits of Man's life are not the real limits; that the one earth-life of which each of us is conscious, far from being the whole of one's life, is but a tiny fragment of it,—one term of its ascending 'series,' one day in its cycle of years. In other words, the spiritual fertility of the average Utopian child, taken in conjunction with the spiritual sterility of the average non-Utopian child (and man), points to the conclusion which the thinkers of the Far East reached thousands of years ago,—that for the full development of human nature, a plurality of lives is needed. . . .

"This is one lesson which Utopia has taught me. There is another which had also been anticipated by the thinkers of the Far East. If under exceptionally favorable conditions certain spiritual and mental qualities are able to blossom freely in the space of a few years, which under normal conditions would remain undeveloped during a life-time of seventy or eighty years, may we not infer that there is a directer path to spiritual maturity than that which is ordinarily followed? May we not infer that there are ways of living, ways into which parents and teachers can lead the young, which, if faithfully followed, will allow the potencies of Man's higher nature to evolve themselves with what we, with our limited experience, must regard as abnormal celerity, and which will therefore shorten appreciably Man's journey to his goal. (This was the idea which inspired the Founder of Buddhism, and led him to formulate a scheme of life, in virtue of which he takes rank, as it seems to me, as the greatest educationalist, as well as the greatest moralist, that the world has ever known.) And if there is a directer path to spiritual maturity than that which is ordinarily followed, is not the name for it *Self-realisation?*

"I will not pursue these speculations further. But, speaking for myself, I will say that the vista which the idea of self-realisation opens up to me goes far beyond the limits of any one earth-life or sequence of earth-lives, and far, immeasurably far, beyond the limits of the sham eternity of the conventional Heaven and Hell.

"But even if there is the fullest provision in Nature (whether by a spiral ascent through a long chain of lives, or by some directer path) for the final development in each individual man of the potencies of perfect manhood, for the final realisation of the divine or true self,—

what then? What does it all mean? Why are we to follow the path of self-realisation? What is the purpose of the cycle of existence? There is an answer to this obstinate question,—an answer which explains nothing, and yet is final, in that it leaves nothing to be explained. The expansive energies and desires, to yield to which is our wisdom and our happiness, are ever transforming themselves, as we yield to them, into the might and ardour of Love. And for love there is no final resting-place but the sea of Divine Love from which it came. *'Amor ex Deo natur est, nec potest nisi in Deo requiescere.'"* Love was born of God, nor can it find rest unless in God.

These pages we take to be the essence of the book. They set forth the Author's ideal, no longer in relation to the criticism of Buddhism or Christianity, but directly, immediately, wholly in terms of his own. The application of these ideals to education, as it is, and as it might be, we must leave our readers to make for themselves.

The better is one thing, the dearer is another thing; these two bind a man in opposite ways. Of these two, it is well for him who takes the better; he fails of his object, who chooses the dearer.

The better and the dearer approach a man; going round them, the sage discerns between them. The sage chooses the better rather than the dearer; the fool chooses the dearer, through lust of possession.

Thou, indeed, pondering on dear and dearly-loved desires, O Nachiketas, hast passed them by. Not this way of wealth hast thou chosen, in which many men sink.

Far apart are these two ways, unwisdom and what is known as wisdom. I esteem Nachiketas as one seeking wisdom, nor do manifold desires allure thee.

Others, turning about in unwisdom, self-wise and thinking they are learned, fools, stagger, lagging in the way, like the blind led by the blind.

The great Beyond gleams not for the child, led away by the delusion of possessions. "This is the world, there is no other," he thinks.

—From the *Katha Upanishad.*

FRAGMENTS

"Believe more in your own power and your own strength. Keep that belief steadily before you. Do not let inner things ever seem cold or abstract. That is a lower view indeed: go up higher and look from there. All that is sweet and true and vital in life—the very essence of these—you have here but symbols of. The reality, in its glory, you cannot now conceive, but you can *believe* in it, and take comfort and strength from your faith.

"Your whole life is an exemplification of the necessity for seeing and leaning upon the inner realities; and having found in some measure the clue, you should use it always. Your powers of endurance are greatly taxed, also your faith; but you are not of those who fail in the dark hour of trial; for the flame of the soul leaps higher when fed by the heart's own blood.

"Let the purpose be clear, then, the will firm. Tune your instrument constantly by the tuning-fork of your ideal, and never let it drop a key. The light of the soul is a light to light the world: tell yourself *that,* and live it."

"Do not mistake your present lower condition, nor think it aught it is not. Such periods of exhaustion come after great expenditures of effort, and should be understood and calmly accepted. A piece of work was accomplished, a time of difficulty and darkness bravely lived through. May not the two be connected? May not the power to aid have been earned?

"The initiations of daily life are constant and manifold: You are beginning to understand this. Persevere, and you will see all things maturing as you desire. The *real* wishes of our hearts must always be fulfilled. Do not doubt your own powers; they have only been temporarily exhausted. But greater powers yet will arise from patient acceptance of this—another initiation perhaps—and so you may go forward with a more steadfast faith. Meditate deeply on these phases of your consciousness, and insist always on your own courage and powers of endurance; *they never can fail you if you do;* and though you seem sometimes to be reaching the limit of your strength, you never will.

"Bye and bye you will grow accustomed to living always on the edge of defeat (the chêla's habitual position, since he treads a hair line). Your head will no longer be made dizzy by gazing down a precipice (you know the old stories of initiation); and that conquered, a definite progress will have been made. Consider attentively these matters, for they are worthy consideration, and most vital points may be gained from them.

"It is necessary only that the Lodge sees you,—that you please it. What matter the idle thoughts or still more idle words of others? Seek the satisfaction of your own heart and conscience, and where these do not

acquit you, study out your mistake,—all involved in it, all that led to it,—make all possible amends; and the experience will be worth more to you than not to have failed.

"Keep up a stout heart. The way is hard and long, but you are treading it bravely; and there is always work for a lonely heart, with meditation; and love for a tired one: for each act of giving brings a wondrous peace. Learn from the dark hours behind, what can be lived through, and take courage for the future. . . . And now take the tired brain and body to bed."

Standing as you do for inner things, realize at the same time that your work must not interfere with that of others of a different kind. Each plays his part, and while steadfastly adhering to yours, condemn no other. It is a hair line, not easy, but important to observe. Without it your labour will be fruitless; for this larger tolerance is a proof of insight,—insight intellectual, as sympathy is insight of the heart. In other words, you must never lose your sense of proportion. This has been a cardinal lack in many religious teachers as well as in ordinary religious men and women; and its absence has sterilized what would else have been superb achievement.

Remember that the inner world and life are not set over against the outer. The poor, tired earth, that has struggled for long ages in vain to reconcile these two, needs to learn the great truth at last! The inner world is *within* the outer; and like a lamp in a darkened house, illuminates its chambers, shows its stairways and passages, the uses of its furniture; and turns the soul from an uneasy ghost, wandering helplessly through its gloom and mystery, into a happy tenant who finds cheer and warmth. To reach our home is not so truly a matter of going somewhere, as of bringing this light into those places where we now abide. Perchance, when we see them thus illumined, we shall recognize them as mansions in the Father's house, and since those mansions are many, we may be sure that all temperaments, all characters, are provided for with loving care. So there is room for all, and place for all, and no necessity that our rules or views should prevail, save in that narrow domain which we call self, where the Great Powers themselves bow to our laws, with infinite understanding and courtesy, demanding of us always the stature of our own ideals, and the fixity of the stars in those courses our higher moments have prescribed.

Rigid with self; indulgent with all others; cultivating balance, wide vision, sense of distances and depths and heights; keen to detect the fleck of wrong within, beholding as from a mountain top the molehill of another's sin; breathing the air of lofty altitudes, and bringing it with us as a breath of the vast pureness of the snows;—founded on principles such as these your work shall endure, and, though you may never realize the extent of your accomplishment (better so!), future ages shall see it, and will light their fires at the torch you hold today. CAVÉ.

LETTERS TO FRIENDS

DEAR FRIEND:

I HAVE your letter and thank you for its frank directness. You ask that I be equally direct in my reply, and indeed I would answer in no other way what you have written. Frankly, then, you are seeking for the soul in the only place where it does not exist—in negations.

You say that for years you have mortified yourself; that you have steadily fought against all the passions and desires of your personality, striving to fulfil in literal exactitude the maxim of "never doing anything which the personality desires for itself alone." You feel that, either of your own will, or under the compulsion of circumstances, you have surrendered all that made life dear to you. And yet, you say, you have not found the goal you seek; your heart is dark and cold, and only at rare moments of your meditation do you feel the Master's nearness and his love and sympathy.

I know how splendidly, and with what indomitable persistence, you have fought. I know how hard some of your sacrifice has been. Yet you have done only half of what is asked of us, and that half you have not done rightly. Throughout, your effort has been negative. It should have been and must be positive. You have given everything but yourself; and yourself is the one positive thing you have to give. I can hear you say that this is not so; that you have given all you had. Yes; but separating it from yourself. You gave up this, you surrendered that, and felt yourself naked and stripped. Had you given yourself with your possessions, with your faults and virtues, with all you were and just as you were, into the Master's hands, to do with as he would, you could not now feel loss. But you have sought to give these and yet hold yourself back; retaining to the last your own will, your own pride, your own separate life. And so in truth you have given little to the Master, though much to your own desire for righteousness and personal stature. You have given up much, but you have given him little. For until we give ourselves to him we can give him nothing else.

The Master does not rob us. He has no part in our robbery of self. He asks us for our hearts, that his joy may be fulfilled in us. And if, and when, we give him our hearts, he asks for all else, that all may be made ours in him; the good made better and the evil made good. Of ourselves we can hold and keep nothing. Fortune, health, human love, our friends and our strength and our virtues,—all slip from our hands and fall as dust. Who and what are we that we can hold anything at all? But what we give to him, he holds for us forever,—if it so be that he holds us also. But till we give ourselves he can take nothing that is ours.

Let us face the facts. Yours has been till now the false asceticism. You have sought the Master and the soul through denial of all that was personal. You have thrown the personal from you. You have neither given nor used it. Learn now to use it and to give it by giving yourself. Learn, as *Light on the Path* tells us, that "the whole nature of man must be used wisely by the one who desires to enter the way"; that "all steps are necessary to make up the ladder"; that virtues are useless if they stand alone; and that we need to mount also upon the steps of our vices, one by one, as they are overcome, and as we learn to use the power they confined. We need to use this power, not throw it from us.

Do you remember one evening when we were in M.'s rooms together, you made him tell us of the modern mathematical conception of the infinite? It seemed to me that in it was the secret of the religious life. The old view of the infinite was wholly negative. It was not finite,—not this, not that. Whatever was named, whatever was expressed, it was not. Greater than all, it could, men thought, only be conceived by the denial of all. So, too, the middle ages thought of the infinite soul—It was not this; it was not that. The road lay in denial of all that was visible, natural, personal and human. But in so viewing the infinite, whether of number or of soul, nothingness was viewed as well. There was no difference in terms; small difference in thought; and, too often, small difference in result. Men made solitude and called it peace; emasculated evil and called it good. How different were the lives of the true saints. And how different the modern mathematics. The infinite is that which can be wholly portrayed in a part of itself, which part is then in direct correspondence with the whole, point by point, and element by element, reproducing the whole, and as rich as it, because at one with it. You remember the illustrations of this—in lines and in numbers—but its truest illustration is in ourselves. If we indeed seek the infinite soul, if we would live with its life and its consciousness, then our way is not in the denial and rejection of the personality, but in making of it a complete image of the infinite whole in which it is a part. This is possible for us precisely because the whole is infinite, and because the personality is whole. Our task is not to kill the personality, but to order and to attune it.

You have tried to kill it. Do so no longer. You have tried to hold it from acting in accordance with its own will. Try now to make it act in accordance with the Master's will; with the will and in the likeness of the infinite soul.

Let me be just as explicit upon this point as I can. I have said you have given up much but have as yet given little. Here is an illustration of what I mean. You give up your own way. In some small matter you accept another's way instead of your own. But it is acceptance and surrender with you. You are thinking of what you are giving up, not what he is gaining. You do not throw yourself whole heartedly

into his desire. You give no gladness, nothing of yourself to him. Your act is negative, not positive. You have given up your own way, but you have not given yourself to his way. You hold yourself back, and your gift is useless. Worse than useless, for it spreads the chill atmosphere of negation over both you and him. He can only wish you had had your way rather than given him his in this dead, reluctant fashion. You are both the poorer, not the richer, for your act.

This evil of doing things by halves is the most common fact of experience. The other day I went with a friend to purchase some knick-knacks he wished to take home as presents. He was long in making his selection and I grew tired and restless in waiting. Why? Because I held myself back from my friend's interest. Because I thought of myself waiting, and of what I wished to do next, rather than of what he was doing then, and of how I could help him. I gave my time, but not myself; and from it only fatigue and loss resulted. I was negative, not positive. I was living in myself and the future, not in the spirit of friendship and the present. I was more tired by that one hour of negative, self-indulgent restlessness of thought, and the effort to conceal it with an outer veneer of courtesy, than by a full day of hard work; and my friend must have wished me anywhere except on the chair beside him. Yet had I given myself whole heartedly to him and his interest, taking the one opportunity of service which the moment offered, I could have made that afternoon a time of pleasure and of rest, as had been many others like it.

That which is true of such little things is true also of great. We make our great sacrifices and the pain of them goes deep. There is, perhaps, no way of avoiding that pain. But there is a way of flooding it with joy. It is the way of *self*-sacrifice; of bringing ourselves with our gift to the altar, and laying both in the Master's hands. Then do we keep that which we give.

Again let me try to be perfectly explicit. I give up my own pleasure for the pleasure of another. My pleasure is surrendered. But if, in this gift, I give myself as well, I can enter into and share my friend's pleasure as keenly—more keenly—than I could have enjoyed my own. This is the test of the gift of self,—when we find our joy in the joy of the one to whom we give ourselves. Joy is and must be at the heart of self-sacrifice. If we find no joy we may know that we have given something other than ourselves. The gift given without ourselves, the gift we do not flood with joy, is better not given at all.

We come back then to this: what you have to do, what each one of us has to do, is to give ourselves to the Master, just as we are and with all we are; and to make this gift positive, not negative. We have to do more than "place ourselves before God like prepared canvas before a painter,"—though this is much. We have also to place in his hands, as his palette, the totality of our human qualities, holding none back,

throwing none away, regarding none as common or unclean when in his hands and cleansed by him. These are the colours with which the painting must be made, the living colours of the new life born from above and built upon the model of the Master's plan for us.

You tell me you have striven daily to acquire concentration, to keep your mind fixed and one-pointed upon a single theme. Indispensable as this practice is, it is still but the negative half of concentration as we have to learn it. Strive now to learn the positive half; to bring to all you do all you are; to concentrate upon and in each act of service all the power, all the sweetness, all the gladness of your nature.

There are times when we are tempted to think this impossible, when the burden of our sacrifice seems too heavy for our strength, and we feel we have no power left to give. When all our nerves are raw and quivering with pain, we ask ourselves how we can give sweetness. And we almost laugh when we think that, from our sodden misery, gladness must be given and expressed. Yet it is here, at the brink of personal failure and exhaustion, when we have neither power, nor sweetness, nor gladness to use for ourselves, that we have most of them to give to another. And if we then give ourselves to that other, the power and the sweetness and the gladness become again our own. The secret of it all is in the gift of self, and the secret of self-giving is love.

You say, and say rightly, that you do not love enough,—for this is true of all of us. But you add, that to say this does not help to better it, for you cannot make yourself love more than you do. True; but you can enter more completely into the love you have. And, as you do this, you will find it far greater than you had thought, and you will see it grow steadily and luminously before your vision.

Again let me try to make concrete and little, what is too often left as mere abstraction, because so great. I say you can enter more completely into the love you have, and by so doing you will find your love adequate to your need, sufficient to give power, sweetness and gladness to your sacrifice. Take anyone you please—a mere chance acquaintance for whom you have a kindly sympathy. This sympathy alone is sufficient love to bring gladness from sacrifice if you will, in actual fact, throw yourself into it. Suppose you sacrifice something for this man's pleasure. Once the sacrifice is made there are two courses open to you. The first is to think of yourself and what you have surrendered. From this standpoint all is hard, cheerless and barren. The second is to think of him, to keep your eyes fixed on the object for which you sacrificed, on his pleasure, and deliberately, by act of will and imagination, to enter into his enjoyment, putting yourself in his place, feeling what he feels, glad with his gladness, and augmenting his gladness with your own. Even the smallest love suffices for this purpose, if we add to it a resolute effort of will and sustained imagination. It is not love which is lacking.

It is the will to give ourselves to love, and to use every power of the personality to make that gift complete.

What is this wonderful, complex personality of ours, if it be not all we have or know of the soul? Why do we insist on separation when in life itself none exists? What are will, desire, passion, gladness and sympathy and imagination, but rays of divine life and divine power? Cut them off from their source, gather them for themselves alone, and they must wither and die, as a flower cut from its stem. But as living and blooming on the plant itself, drawing the sap to the air and giving from the air to the sap, in ordered harmony with the whole of which they are a part, they are the carriers of seed for its renewing life. Because the personality of itself is lifeless, does not mean that it is lifeless or useless to and in the soul. We cannot cut it, or any part of it, away from us, without cutting it away from the soul. Our task is to order and use it wisely, in every portion and detail, till it becomes, in literal truth, the perfect picture of the wholeness of the soul of which it is a part. Then, and then only, when there is no more difference between inner and outer, between soul and personality, when there is no bar or wall "where man the effect ceases and God the cause begins," when the walls are taken away and the consciousness stretches unbroken to its source,—then, if we do so choose, the personality can drop from us and be laid down. But till that time comes "the whole nature of man must be used wisely by the one who desires to enter the way."

I do not know whether what I have written will seem to you an answer to your letter or will help you to see, as I have hoped, the positive pathway of love, imaginative sympathy, and glad self-giving which is open to your feet and which will lead you to all you seek. Above all it will lead you to a realization of how much you already have; how close, through all these years, has been the Master whom you thought far off; how great and deep, beyond your thinking, is the love you bear to him, and which is but the reflection of his love for you; how close to joy has been the sacrifice you have till now seen only with self-pity.

You have done much. And though you have, heretofore, by holding back yourself, held back the fruit of your efforts, none of them is wasted. No effort is wasted, however misdirected, which has been made for motives, such as yours, of obedience to your highest vision. The force of every sacrifice, of every surrender of your own way, of every ounce of pressure you have put upon yourself, and which has been, or seemed, so barren, is stored in your will as power to give gladness when at last you give yourself. You, who have persevered in sacrifice, when it gave no other joy than a grim pride in your own obedience and strength, will find that power of sacrifice intensified a hundredfold when you share its happiness. So will these heavy years have wrought for you an instrument for joy, and you yourself will know that joy, and be its carrier to others.

There is your destiny and your goal,—the Master's plan for you as for us all,—to be the recipients and the carriers of his joy. Let us no longer wait till sacrifice is forced upon us, and then try to make the best of it and give ourselves with that which we can no longer refuse. At most this is but the effort to make positive, in its end, what was negative in its beginning. Let us rather go out to seek occasions; not with the thought of sacrifice of self, but with the thought that through us the Master's joy may be fulfilled within the hearts of others. Let us deliberately, hour by hour, whenever we hear a clock strike, or in the pauses of our day, think what, in that hour, or that moment, we can do for the happiness of those we know, or for the world at large. Let us make it as definite and concrete as we can, thinking of those about us, one by one, and deliberately, by act of will and imagination, strive to put ourselves in their place, to look out upon life with their eyes, to feel their feeling and to know their need—and then, feeling with them, let us do the thing which it is in our power to do to make them happy.

This is the positive path,—the yoga of love and of joy. By following it we give ourselves and make our sacrifices, moment by moment, without even knowing it is sacrifice or self surrender. Does it seem to you too small a thing to meet your need? Here, as so often, it is the little which contains the great. You seek the Master. You would follow in his footsteps and train yourself for his service. You long to know him, face to face, and to share his consciousness. Does it seem that you are asked to give yourself to others, not to him? To seek their happiness, not his? I know you cannot so misunderstand; for to do that would be to fail wholly in understanding him you seek. What else is his whole life than such an endless giving of himself, in order that in us and in the world his joy may be fulfilled? How else can we serve him, than in the work which is himself? How else can we share his consciousness, than by making ours more like to his? The service of man may have little in it of the service of God. But the service of God must have much in it of the service of man. We cannot serve the Master without serving where and what he serves,—nor love him without loving what he loves. "Children love one another. For love of me, love one another."

This yoga will teach you much. But of all its lessons, I believe the greatest is the revelation which it brings of the depth and overpowering intensity of the Master's passionate yearning that those who seek to give themselves to him, and to follow in his footsteps, may find happiness in the life to which he leads. Those who have told of the radiance of his face have spoken also of his anguished eyes. It is your anguish and mine, the anguish of the world that will not hear him, which lies there ever before his vision. But, in truth, his yoga is the yoga of joy. Here there can be no difference in the teaching of the Lodge. Method and emphasis may vary with different teachers and

in different times. But the heart of things is ever the same; and "we are closest to the heart of things when we are happy, when in spite of trials and adversities a fountain of joy and gladness springs within us." Misunderstood and travestied throughout the ages, Christ has been called the Man of Sorrows. Yet he came that we might have life, and have it more abundantly,—that his joy might be ours. For these nineteen hundred years how few of those who sought to follow him have looked beyond the initial self-surrender. How few have shared his warrior spirit, which the Lodge demands of all who would draw near its portals, and which, taking pain, can find, within it, joy. Such a spirit is yours, if you will but liberate it. And by it you will come to him you seek—who calls to you today as Jesus called in Galilee: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke (yoga) upon you and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

May you learn of him, from this day forth.

Faithfully yours,

JOHN GERARD.

Finish every day and be done with it; you have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities, no doubt, crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day; begin it well and serenely, and with too high a spirit to be cumbered with your old nonsense. Today all is good and fair. It is too dear, with its hopes and invitations, to waste a moment on the yesterday.

EMERSON.

THE HEART OF THE MYSTERY*

". . . Beheld the immortals sweatless, steady-eyed, their garlands fresh, and touching not the ground; but he, doubled by his shadow, standing there upon the earth, was stained with dust and sweat, his garland faded."

WHAT heart but at times grows weary of this our human life, with its births, its marriages, its deaths; with its pathways of small ambition and sordid struggle leading forward in monotonous deadly certainty to the green mound beneath the cypresses? Who has not cried out in spirit against it all, longing to turn back from the beaten road where mankind runs, with a dazed eagerness like that haunted herd of Gadara, swept by demoniac presences down the steep to the blue Genesaret waves? There is pathos in it, too, and pitifulness; even for the most infatuate, life soon wears so threadbare, so seamed with dullest commonness, that the hurrying troop of doomed men and women would presently cast away their burden, were it not snatched from their shoulders by the old man with the hour-glass, who ushers them into the silence.

Who has not felt in moments of clear sight, in hours of inspiration, that these good people are ridden with dreams, and we along with them; that we have elsewhere a quite other history not made of epitaphs but written in letters of gold, with words of fire, in the serene halls of immortals? Man dreams that he moves forward; he only moves from dream to dream. He is demon-ridden, dwelling altogether among shadows, and that most of all when he is most confidently sensual and material. But there are times when he outgrows the form and color of his dream, and must have change. The sleeper restlessly moves and murmurs in his sleep; then for one startled moment he opens his eyes to the everlasting sunshine.

Then comes a new dream, a new epoch, a new era. So it was two thousand years ago, when the Roman world of beneficent callous force was wearing itself out, when the dream of Olympian Jove was fading. Then were spoken words among the Galilean hills that let in the light of the Eternal, and for a moment the eyes of mortal man gazed into the shining eyes of his brother the immortal. Then mankind sank back again to dream. There remained only broken fragments of the message, like words set echoing among the rocks, to bear evidence of the revelation. The old Roman dream of dominion flowed back again, staining the ray of celestial light. What belonged to Cæsar was rendered to God.

The new era enthroned a heavenly monarch in the purple, darkening

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altogether the true vision of the divine, the vision of man the immortal. Our kingdoms and empires with their claims of election and grace, their mandate from on high, were but copies of imperial Rome touched with the ray of Galilee; our divinity, but an image of these earthly potentates exalted to the heavens, an autocrat exacting homage, gathering tribute, and entering into treaties with mankind. A few enjoyed the suffrage of salvation; the rest were doomed to servitude in hell.

Centuries have passed, and this dream, too, has faded. The power of the celestial Cæsar has declined. His jewelled throne is crumbling. The nether fires are out. The golden city is deserted; grass is growing in its streets. The songs of cherubim and seraphim are stilled, and silence reigns through the high halls of heaven. With the passing of the divine Cæsar's throne, fades, too, the materialism which undermined it, hardly outliving his fall. Materialism is already out of date, grown grotesque and antiquated. We are offered instead a physical proof of our immortality, material evidence of the enduring soul.

So that dream within a dream has faded, and there comes a lull, when the light from beyond the heavens once more sends forth its ray to challenge the darkness. As of old, it brings the message of our present immortality, not in a dim future paradise, but here and now; of salvation not by faith or works, but by creative will; of immediate and intimate touch with the eternal heart of being. Even here and now, we are in the midst of the everlasting; we catch the immortal whisper, feel the immortal fire in our hearts, the touch of an immortal finger summoning us forth into light.

Then the dreams of our desires come upon us again, and imaginings of terror; the cynical unfaith of sensuality, and that very human cry for yet a little slumbering and sleep. We are once more entangled among shadows, and hurry forth dazed to the lake-edge of Gadara. Yet there is a golden clue to guide us forth from this labyrinth of dreams; there is a path that leads us back from the abyss of death, easy to find, yet hard to follow, and calling for the valor and vision of immortals in those who would tread its ways.

The shadows may be met and overcome. And first of all, the shadow of our sensuality. Our error here is easy to indicate, and well worth mending; for its fruit is inevitable death. We sin by meeting the natural world in a wrong and vicious way; with a demand for sensations, instead of an offer of work. We desire keenness of feelings, keenness of life; and we have a right to it, but we take the wrong way to gain it, and nature herself ceaselessly admonishes us of our mistake.

Nature intends sensation only as a guide to work, a guide for the will; but we make sensation an end in itself, and thus incur inevitable doom. For sensation which is not turned to the purposes of the will must bear one of two fruits: either at every repetition the stir of feeling will grow less, rendered callous by use until there comes the dullness

of total insensibility; or, if the outward stimulus be constantly increased, as it must be to give even the same excitement, it will grow at last to such a pitch that the natural body is worn out and torn to pieces. These alternatives are but differing forms of death.

Perfecting his creature throughout ages, God at last gave him reason and called him man. This was the fruit of that gift of freedom: for every power committed to his will, the new-enfranchised creature devised an abuse, to the end of sensuality. The power to choose and reason upon his food lies wholly within his will; with the result that he grows blurred and bloated with excess, or lean-eyed and cavernous with hungry longing. The faculty to reproduce his kind, also entrusted to him, he has transformed from a pure instinct to an absorbing passion; after a brief pairing season, animals are sexless throughout the year, but man is ever insatiate with hungry longings. Of the bodily powers, God kept to himself the heart and the life-breath, holding them back from his creature's interference. Were it otherwise, man in his perverseness seeking sensuality even in these, would have broken the vital casket in fragments, abolishing himself long ago from the earth.

It is well that the animals are dumb. They might mock their lord. Sensuality is as foreign to them as the fear of death. These are the sign-manuals of our humanity. Yet the instinct which leads so far astray is a pure one, destined to an infinitely better reward, a far higher fulfilment than any dreamed by man. For the lust of life is at heart the desire of immortality, the longing for infinite being. But we err in meeting nature through our appetites, not through our wills; in coming into the world with a demand, when we should come with an offer of creative work, work carried out through the insight and inspiration of our immortal part. Even bodily health comes always through exertion, and never through sensation; so direct is the admonition of our natural life. Strength comes only through energy well applied, and in the work of the will is our peace.

The true intention of our life is, that the senses should serve the will, not that will should serve the senses. In right living, each perception leading the will to work is strengthened by that work, and by this a better way is ready for a higher perception; thus the interposition of the will annuls the law of deadening and destruction which hangs over sensation, and leads each sense on a steadily upward path. We can watch this law in two fields. First, in the primal world of instinct, we see that every sense was thus led to perfection, by work and will; by the inherent energy of the will toward life bursting outwards through the living world. Again, under inspiration every sense grows finer. The musician and the painter, while they are faithful to the inner light, may develope their sense of hearing and color to a degree that is magical, through the divine alchemy of the will; following sensation never for sensation's sake, but always as the guide and material of the will.

Yet in face of this simple truth, the ideal of whole nations esteemed the foremost in the modern world is not will but sensation. For the desire of wealth is the lust of sensation, of command over sensual things. Therefore at the very outset we violate the law, reading life's riddle upside down. This universal and corrupt lust, not for one sensation but for all, this craving for a ceaseless ministry of excitement, brings out the greed and graspingness in man, causing endless misery of struggle, and putting vultures and jackals to shame, for the weakness of their claws.

Nine-tenths of human power is used in mere strife, force neutralizing force, as in a tug of war. Yet the remaining tenth suffices for our bodily needs. Imagine then what splendid excess of power, what universal wealth of will is before us, once we learn the law.

Our sensual tragedy is not untouched with grim humor and palpable retribution. Of the formative sex, a part finds its whole purpose in ministering to sensation, and for this good gift demands luxurious living and immunity from work. The vassals go forth in the chill dawn, returning only in the twilight; dwarfing their powers in hireling tasks of mere repetition, they grow daily duller and more akin to earth, till even the senses they worship can give them no more joy. Their enthroned sovereigns pay penalty also in the infinite futility of their lives, which even conceit cannot gild to any brightness; they are punished, too, in the growing dullness of their mates. Then, for both, that mound beneath the cypresses, and infinitely merciful death.

Happily for us, much of our lives is still within the realm of pure animal instinct, like the love of family, and the ideal of bodily strength and beauty. For instinct is the voice of revelation to the natural world. It is more; it is our sole evidence of outward reality. Reason can never give this sense of reality; for reason, the natural world is but a web of dreams. But instinct expressed through muscular effort gives us our true hold on natural life. We are held in place among the stars and worlds by a web of natural forces co-ordinated with our wills, with our instinctive powers. Reason can only generalize on these. Reason can never explain or guide.

All of our work is blest which flows from instinct, carried on without reasoning or calculated motive, but arising from an inward enthusiasm and necessity. Such is the work of all true artists, inventors, builders in every realm; they draw their instant inspiration from the ideal world, and work joyfully, resting in creative will. But so stringent is the law, that the moment men or nations fall below the inspiration of the will, and fix their eyes upon wealth and possessions, their power ebbs; all access to new regions of nature, all new command of force is impossible for them, and they are presently outstripped in the race by some other man or nation whose vision is still in the ideal world. Even of

organized murder is this true; victory belongs to the men of ideas, never to the materialists. So wholly does power flow from inspiration.

Thus far the natural history of man, most discreditable of animals. But our interest begins only where that chapter ends, and we enter human life. And human life is a history of ideas altogether, of thoughts and passions, of longings and desires, even of visions and dreams; but never a history of material facts. When we leave animal instinct and muscular effort, we leave matter also, and enter the psychic world. No bodily eye has ever beheld the things of man, whether it be power or wealth or pleasure, sorrow or ambition or love.

Yet it cannot be pretended that the tale is all brightness. We are hardly less wrong-hearted in the psychic than in the natural world. We manage to defeat our destiny also here. We are sent forth into this human world to live through intuition, the clear sense of each other's souls. As instinct, the revelation of the divine in animal life, impels us to master the natural world, to replenish the earth and subdue it; so intuition, which is the divine revelation in man, compels us to enter into the being of each other, that thereby we may infinitely enlarge our own. Nothing is needed for perfect moral health but a clear sense of each other's souls. All our human life, debased and draggled in the dust as it too often is, has yet this golden thread running through it everywhere. It is to the human soul in each other that we appeal, even in sin and crime, the black shadows of our humanity. We do not lust after trees and stones; nor do we hate and envy rocks. We do not seek food for vanity from cloud and ocean. Only human souls will serve our turn.

If we are true to this one intuition, we hold the key to boundless life. For the soul is everywhere in all men; it is everywhere different and divine. And our clear intuition, our sense of the gleaming soul in others, makes us freeholders of all their powers. All they have and know and do belongs to us, if we have the strength to take possession. The instinct is in us all; we only need to make it effective. It is the inherent quality of souls to share each other's being; to add each to its own life the life of all others, until every individual is heir to the consciousness and power of all mankind.

But having the intuition of the soul, we straightway fall from our revelation into corrupt imaginings. Instead of aiding the soul to do its perfect work in all, to bring forth such fruits as befit our immortality, we instantly try to wrest the law awry to the ends of our lust. We would have all these souls bow down before us, ministering to our vanity; we fix our eyes on that longed for tribute instead of fixing it on the other soul; therefore instead of strength, we bring forth weakness, and presently our intuition of the soul is overcast and dimmed. Thus we fall into solitude and desolation.

We forget that all our real strength comes through union, and

aspire to be separate and supreme. We set up within our hearts a crowned Cæsar in the purple, inviting all mankind to do him homage. But they are doing the like within themselves; there are too many Cæsars; the tribute will not go round. Therefore much sorrow and many heart-burnings are the only revenue of our kingdoms. Throughout all high heaven and the wide fields of stellar space there is no law declaring that we are to be worshipped; that homage is due to us. Yet we are miserable for want of it, and go down sorrowing to our graves. The longing to be envied is an even stronger incentive of wealth than the mere desire of sensations; but here also we defeat our end, for the riches are coveted, but their owner inherits only hate and fear.

Every one of us is born with a different nature, different fancy, different desires. Yet it has always been the insanity of men to try to compel each other into a common path, and to suffer the agony of thwarted ambition that inevitable failure brings. Hardly one of us but is cursed with this malady even now, and suffers from its fruitful crop of sorrows. Instead of demanding that others should obey me, should find their purpose in my mind, should follow a pathway traced out for them by my thought and vanity and desire, let me at least learn to take the better way, and admit that each must live for himself, must live from his own genius, following his law, not mine. If I do this, trusting his life to the soul I feel within him, I am instantly conscious of a release of force within myself, an inheritance of power, an inward luminousness, making me certain I have taken the true way. I have inherited the soul I recognized in him.

If we begin by so small a thing as mere forbearance, tolerating each other's souls, admitting that they also may have a light and life-impulse of their own, we shall soon grow interested and involved in their creative work, finding it a revelation of something new, something beyond ourselves, yet akin to us; before long, instead of hindering the soul in each other, we shall learn to help it, and each will grow rich and rejoice in the gain of every other; for all real gain is for us all. The sense of each others' souls is the first revelation of peace. It was this that the Galilean came to teach, this and no other was the light shining in darkness, but the darkness comprehended it not.

We may come to understand the matter in this way: the greatest of all poets has created and put on record for us a thousand men and women, great and gifted, wise or witty, sorrowful or sublime. We can each of us read ourselves into the life of all of them, understanding every thought and emotion of them all, entering perfectly into their inmost hearts until we become one with them. We grow and add new powers to our souls with each added understanding; yet after we have assimilated all, all remains quite unimpaired for all that shall come after us; and, finally, we do not try to dictate to Hamlet, to lay down the law for

Lear, to reason with Romeo or Macbeth; we are satisfied that each should be himself, and follow his own genius.

Something like this we should do in life, but with the immense advantage that we are dealing with living souls, touching them direct, entering into them by intuition. Only tolerance and good-will are needed to make us infinitely rich in immediate spiritual power, gained thus from the exhaustless treasurehouse of man. Thus we learn that intuition, the impulse of the will which leads us to each others' souls, is the real guide of human life, an immediate divine revelation. Reason is as powerless to teach us human truth as it was to teach us the reality of the world. We are in the hands of a wiser power than reason, if we would only follow its leading. We are in the hands of the creative will.

Thus we learn wisdom's first lessons, and set up two milestones on the path of our immortality. We need only substitute our inherent energy for the lust of sensation, to inherit all the primal power of the natural world, and all its beauty. We may knit our wills into the powers that hold the world in place, and share the freshness of the forests, the freedom of the human world; instead of living for vanity and bitter pride, we may cast all barriers down, opening our souls to the souls of men, and instantly inherit the treasure of endless life which gleams and glows in every heart of man.

Nor is our work then ended. Say rather that it now begins. Having reached this double liberation, we have won the power to pierce the secret of all secrets, the splendid and majestic mystery which rests at the heart of all life. Learning to stand upright and to feel our strength, we are soon touched with a dawning inspiration that there is vastly more of us than we dreamed; that we are far greater than even in golden moments we dared to hope; that the personal part of us we know and live in is but the antechamber, the outer court of the temple, while the true lord dwells within.

The divine web of instincts which holds us in the bosom of the natural world, gives no account of itself, nor can assign to itself any purpose; nor even does our human intuition show a definite end in view, a final purpose whereto all union and illumination tend. We must look elsewhere for the final goal, for the everlasting purposes which have had so great preparation, which hold such magical powers of creative instinct and unveiled intuition in their sway. The instinct in us urges us forth into the outer world by a revelation of life outside ourselves in every natural realm. The intuition of our heart urges us beyond ourselves in another and more divine direction, impelling us to go forth from ourselves into the hearts of others like ourselves, to knock and enter every human door, till all be realized and possessed. There is something higher than instinct or intuition: there is inspiration, urging us to go forth from our personal selves, to rise above them to our

immortal life; to inherit here and now celestial potencies; to make true for man the dreams we have dreamed of God.

It is for this that man has lived and toiled so many weary ages; it is for this that human hearts have struggled through milleniums of sorrow and hate: that they might learn the law. If we have greatly gone astray, this proves at least that we are free even to err; that our wills are masters over destiny, even to our own destruction. If we have hated and deceived and lied, tyrannized and lusted and defamed, it proves at least that we are heirs of liberty in dealing with human souls, even to their infinite sorrow and to ours. If we have the right of wantonness, we have the right of strength; if we are free to injure, we are free to heal; and setting ourselves right at last with nature and with man, we hold in our hands the key to open the door whence our freedom came, to enter the deathless shrine where was woven the web of our stormy destiny.

Let us consider that the will in us, manifest as instinct and energy in our bodily selves, is akin to every force in the natural world, and can at the last bring every natural force within the hollow of our hands; let us also consider that the will in our human hearts is akin to every will of man, that the same divinity runs through all, impelling us all to oneness, to enter each others' lives, to raze all barriers between our own and others' souls; if we understand these two truths, we shall fully understand that our life is not contained and confined within this limited casket of our personal selves; that we are but the open doorways to the infinite divine; that for each mortal there is an immortal brother, strong and serene above the cloudland of our life, bending this life to everlasting purposes, leading our outcast pilgrim souls through rough and devious ways to the halls of peace, the dwelling-places of everlasting power.

This much is easily understood of every simplest mind: that he who would inherit bodily well-being, the young joy of the morning in his natural self, needs only to follow the revelation of instinct, to turn back from sensation and sensuality, to find cleanness and health in energy and power, and not in desire. It is a transformation of the whole animal life, through the will, easily understood and bringing instant evidence of rightness in the release of power within our natural selves.

This, too, is not hard to understand: that we do ourselves much human wrong when we try to live through vanity and bitter pride; when we find each others' souls only to tyrannize and overreach them; when we try to thwart the free life and genius in each other, instead of helping it to the flower of its perfect life. Here again, it needs only a conversion of the will to bring us infinite peace, to set us right with all human souls; and this conversion of the will, so readily appealing to our understanding, will instantly justify itself by its first fruits of love, joy, peace, and, even more than these traditional blessings, by an immense access of human power and light.

Grasping this, we shall more readily understand the greater matter, for which these two steps are but the preparation and first outline: the tremendous truth that we are to go through one more conversion of the will, changing from mortal to immortal purposes, to inherit our real selves. We have through the desert of our human history a few examples of what may be done by those who are true to their immortal part: in creative genius, divine valor, heroic sacrifice. Not the basest human heart that beats, but throbs in harmony with these better deeds, testifying its own inmost certainty that here our true destiny lies. Every pulse that exults with the hero slain in battle, bears witness of the soul's immorality; every glow of wonder and delight at the beauty and wisdom recorded of the seers is a foreshadowing of our own omniscience; our joy in all heroic deeds is the first gleam of our infinite power.

There stands above us, therefore, for each one of us, a present immortal; easily the equal of the highest life and power our human history records; and it is our destiny, through the inspiration of the will, to enter into the life of this immortal, to draw the everlasting power into ourselves, that even here and now we may inherit divinity. Nor does this mighty task depend solely on our personal selves; nor are we wholly responsible for its success, as we are not answerable for the shining of the sun. Yet we of ourselves must come forth into the sunlight.

There will come a time when the immortal brother shall interpose on our behalf, and we shall be drawn forth from the mortal world and rapt into paradise, hearing words not lawful for mortal lips to utter, for only those lips can speak of them that are already divine. No longer dimly overshadowed by the Soul, we enter through the silence to the very being of the Soul itself. We know that we have found our treasure and inherited our immortality. With undimmed, boundless vision we behold the shining ocean of life. We enter the radiance and the realm. We are filled with infinite power, infinite peace. No longer heirs to the Power, we are the Power itself, in all its immeasurable divinity: the Power which was from the beginning, which shall outlive all ends.

As we rise to the vision of the immortal, there is silence, yet a silence full of song. There is darkness, yet darkness more radiant than light. There is loneliness, yet loneliness full of living souls. The souls of the young-eyed immortals are there, who have passed over, and the souls of mortals yet unseeing, who shall follow after. We have entered the All, the sea of life whose foam and bubbles are the world.

Then the gloom closes upon us and we return from our illumination, descending again to the waking world. As we draw nearer, the whole landscape of life opens before us in scenery of shadow and sunshine. Sky meets earth on the horizon where we entered. Earth draws up again to sky before us, where we shall depart. We see spread forth the country where we shall traverse, with hills and valleys levelled, as we view them from above. All the road is clear, nor do any formidable dangers

threaten to overwhelm us, ere we enter into rest. For one long moment of our return, nought is hidden from us of all things that are to come.

When we unseal the inner fountain, its waters will never more cease to flow into our hearts, bringing life and light and everlasting youth. Many old well-guarded secrets will come to us and reveal themselves in the twilight stillness. Gradually the mists will lift from the infinite army of years we have lived of old, and from the long days that are to come. This one life of our mortality will take its true place in the undivided life, ranged with days vanished, yet still here, with days that are not, yet already are. We shall unravel our tangled skein of fate, clearly seeing where and why we failed. The sins and sorrows of our life will take their true color, in the awful light of the all-seeing soul.

What each man's genius is, will be whispered to him in the silence, when he has found his way back to the immortal life. Thenceforward the genius will work in him, handling all the material of life in a new and masterly way. The perfect poet and artist, the hero, saint and sage differ in this only from other men: that they obey the genius of valor and beauty who stands above them, yielding up the reins to their divinity, and offering their wills as workers for the light. As there is something creative and unprecedented in the life of every hero, in the work of every master of beauty and power, so should it be with us all. Our lives should be every moment creative, bearing always the power and light that are the sign-manual of our divinity.

To discover by subtlest intuition the word of the genius to our other selves, and in all dealings with them to second the will of the immortal even against their mortal selves, is our second task; and we need no longer go abroad to find our other selves. They come to us, pressing closely round our souls in vision or in blindness, in sadness or mirth, in love or hate, as doves and hawks tap at lighthouse windows, to be admitted from the winter's storms. But above love or hate or sorrow is the immemorial essence of our common soul, the holy presence of the everlasting life. We must bow to it in all things, dealing with the immortal in mortals, answering the needs of souls alone. Mortals are at strife, but the immortals in them never. All move in the one Life.

Yet when the last word is said, we are finally concerned, not with the works of our wills, nor with our other selves, but with the immortal Life that gives them life. Our loves and other selves concern us because they are of the Soul. But there is somewhat greater and more august than the Soul's sunbeams, however radiant and full of beauty. There is the infinite Soul itself, the perfect undivided Life. Thither at last shall all our footsteps tend. Thither when our works are ended, when we have reached oneness with our other selves, shall we come to rest, losing ourselves and them and all things to find them again in the immortal Life.

CHARLES JOHNSTON.

THEOSOPHY AND SECULAR LITERATURE

VI

Wordsworth's Prelude

Of joy in widest commonalty spread;
Of the individual Mind that keeps her own
Inviolate retirement, subject there
To Conscience only, and the law supreme
Of that Intelligence which governs all—
I sing:—"fit audience let me find though few!"

* * * * * *

Descend, prophetic Spirit! that inspir'st
The human Soul of universal earth,
Dreaming on things to come; and dost possess
A metropolitan temple in the hearts
Of mighty Poets: upon me bestow
A gift of genuine insight; that my Song
With star-like virtue in its place may shine,
Shedding benignant influence, and secure,
Itself, from all malevolent effect
Of those mutations that extend their sway
Throughout the nether sphere!

THE wise author of *The Creed of Buddha* laments that the Western world "by its instinctive disbelief in the soul is constrained to identify *Nature* with the world without." It is through this disbelief that Wordsworth's verse, more than any English poet's has missed a just appreciation. To the casual admirer, Wordsworth is merely the poet of out-of-doors; he proffers balm and unguents to hurt souls infected with the *maladie du siecle*. His poetic structure is the sanitorium of poetic neurasthenics. The harassed mind, irritated and depressed by the unlovableness of human nature, journeys to Wordsworth's verse as "the world's sweet inn from pain and troublesome turmoil." In his lyrics, one can revel in the loveliness of inanimate things—a violet by a mossy stone, the daffodils in sprightly dance, the cuckoo's twofold shout are a Lethean bath for the weary, tear-stained groper in life's *cul-de-sac;* he straitway forgets the real world and the cruel spectacle that man has made of man.

He found us when the age had bound
Our souls in its benumbing round;
He spoke, and loosed our hearts in tears.
He laid us as we lay at birth
On the cool flowery lap of earth,
The hills were round us, and the breeze
Went o'er the sun-lit fields again;
Our foreheads felt the wind and rain.

Wordsworth is not the singer of the visible, tangible, audible loveliness of outer things. He is the Seer of the Soul. He is the most spiritual of England's pinnacled poets. His light is not dazzling like Shelley's "flush of rose on peaks divine"; it burns with an unflickering flame, diffusing mild radiance. In his writing he carefully discriminates between the immortal world of "Nature" and nature which is only a lovely veil suffused with the color of the Light glowing behind it. The wonder is that those who swiftly or slowly run through his verse do not read the plain statements plainly written there. For Wordsworth was as conscious of his mission as was Dante. He knew that he was "a renovated spirit singled out for holy services," and, to that end, robed in the priestly vestments of verse.

> Nel ciel che piu della sua luce prende
> Fu' io,

the Florentine wrote, and prayed fervently to holy Apollo for aid in setting forth the wonders of the Celestial land. So, Wordsworth entering the "main region of his song," beseeches Divine Guidance along the path.

> Urania, I shall need
> Thy guidance, or a greater Muse, if such
> Descend to earth or dwell in highest heaven!
> For I must tread on shadowy ground, must sink
> Deep—and, aloft ascending, breathe in worlds
> To which the heaven of heavens is but a veil.

The aim of Dante's poem is "to bring those who are living in this life out of the state of misery, and to guide them to the state of happiness." Wordsworth's aim is the same . . .

> By words
> Which speak of nothing more than what we are,
> I would arouse the sensual from their sleep
> Of Death, and win the vacant and the vain
> To noble raptures.

Like Dante, too, Wordsworth reached the heaven of heavens through the wilderness of the world.

> If I oft
> Must turn elsewhere—to travel near the tribes
> And fellowships of men, and see ill sights
> Of madding passions mutually inflamed;
> Must hear Humanity in fields and groves
> Pipe solitary anguish; or must hang
> Brooding above the fierce confederate storm
> Of sorrow, barricadoed evermore
> Within the walls of cities—may these sounds
> Have their authentic comment; that even these
> Hearing, I be not downcast or forlorn!

When Wordsworth reached his thirtieth year, he felt that his *Lehr* and *Wanderjähre* had ended. He had lived through his revolutionary

ardor for France, and had become a supporter of the good old cause. He had returned from Germany to quiet domesticity at Grasmere, where his friend Calvert's legacy would insure freedom from vocational anxiety. His priestly function must now begin. Wordsworth, accordingly, made preparation for a monumental poem that should have for theme the being and destiny of "Man, Nature and Society." Before beginning that ambitious work Wordsworth set about a review of his own life—a retrospect of the path already trod—for the purpose of gaining assurance that his experience fitted him for the philosophical poem contemplated. This review of his life became a long autobiographical poem, and was finished in 1805; but, as a personal record, it was not published until after his death in 1850. As subsidiary to the *magnum opus* he entitled it *The Prelude, or Growth of a Poet's Mind;* and he thought it would bear the relation to the great work that the ante-chapel bears to a cathedral. He thought also that the *magnum opus* would integrate all his lyrics and minor pieces, and that they would be to the cathedral as "cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses." Wordsworth's cathedral was never built. We must worship in the ante-chapel and oratories.

Just in the period when Wordsworth was putting his biography into verse, he wrote also the familiar ode which it is customary to print at the end of his minor poems as their summation and consummation—"On the Intimations of Immortality." This ode is a very brief, impersonal form of the *Prelude.* It is the *Prelude* with all personalities, facts, and localities eliminated—it is the biography generalised. The ode indicates very briefly the cycle of humanity, *"aus der Ewigkeit zu der Ewigkeit hin,"* the descent out of God, the inevitable yoke of earth,

> Heavy as frost and deep almost as life,

the final return to the enchanted hills of Heaven. The subject of the ode is the child's intuitive knowledge of reality, and Wordsworth was able to write vividly upon this theme out of his personal experience. "Nothing was more difficult for me in childhood," he wrote, and repeated it often in conversation, "than to admit the notion of death as a state applicable to my own being. I have said elsewhere

> A simple child,
> That lightly draws its breath,
> And feels its life in every limb,
> What should it know of death!

But it was not so much from feelings of animal vivacity that my difficulty came as from a sense of the indomitableness of the Spirit within me. I used to brood over the stories of Enoch and Elijah, and almost to persuade myself that, whatever might become of others, I should be translated, in something of the same way, to heaven. With a feeling congenial to this, I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart

from, but inherent in, my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality."

The Prelude treats the same subject as the ode, more expansively, with meandering and bending back upon itself like a meadow-brook—every winding and turn serving as a covert for choice blossoms, cowslips, lilies, and ferns. *The Prelude* tells in detail what influences fostered Wordsworth's intuitive faculties, what tended to dull them, how the eye of his spirit went fast asleep during the revolutionary period in France, leaving only his rational mind at work, until his higher nature rose again to power.

Wordsworth's idyllic life by the northern waters, his companions, the Boy of Winander, are all old tales. What a wonderful picture this is of a youth of seventeen?

> How shall I seek the origin? where find
> Faith in the marvellous things which then I felt?
> Oft in these moments such a holy calm
> Would overspread my soul, that bodily eyes
> Were utterly forgotten, and what I saw
> Appeared like something in myself, a dream,
> A prospect in the mind.
> 'Twere long to tell
> What spring and autumn, what the winter snows,
> And what the summer shade, what day and night,
> Evening and morning, sleep and waking, thought
> From sources inexhaustible, poured forth
> To feed the spirit of religious love
> In which I walked with Nature.

How refreshing in view of all the nonsense written about his failure justly to appreciate rhythm and metre, books and poetry, is Wordsworth's account of his early delight in rhythmic sound

> Twice five years
> Or less I might have seen, when first my mind
> With conscious pleasure opened to the charm
> Of words in tuneful order, found them sweet
> For their own *sakes,* a passion, and a power;
> And phrases pleased me chosen for delight,
> For pomp, or love.

The last extract I shall make from *The Prelude* is taken out of the concluding portion of the poem. Wordsworth is telling of the final restoration of his spiritual vision after a period of rationalistic fever. The context describes a moonlight ascent of Mt. Snowdon in Wales. That night is memorable to Wordsworth because, like Teufelsdroechk on the mountain summit, he is once more able to see in the objects around him types and symbols of Eternity. "Of first, and last, and midst, and without end."

Lo! as I looked up,
The Moon hung naked in a firmament
Of azure without cloud, and at my feet
Rested a silent sea of hoary mist.
A hundred hills their dusky backs upheaved
All over this still ocean; and beyond,
Far, far beyond, the solid vapors stretched,
In headlands, tongues, and promontory shapes,
Into the main Atlantic, that appeared
To dwindle, and give up his majesty,
Usurped upon far as the sight could reach.
Not so the ethereal vault; encroachment none
Was there, nor loss; only the inferior stars
Had disappeared, or shed a fainter light
In the clear presence of the full-orbed Moon,
Who, from her soverign elevation, gazed
Upon the billowy ocean, as it lay
All meek and silent, save that through a rift—
Not distant from the shore whereon we stood,
A fixed, abysmal, gloomy, breathing-place—
Mounted the roar of waters, torrents, streams
Innumerable, roaring with one voice!
Heard over earth and sea, and, in that hour,
For so it seemed, felt by the starry heavens.

When into air had partially dissolved
That vision, given to spirits of the night
And three chance human wanderers, in calm thought
Reflected, it appeared to me the type
Of a majestic intellect, its acts
And its possessions, what it has and craves,
What in itself it is, and would become.
There I beheld the emblem of a mind
That feeds upon infinity, that broods
Over the dark abyss, intent to hear
Its voices issuing forth to silent light
In one continuous stream; a mind sustained
By recognitions of transcendent power,
In sense conducting to ideal form,
In soul of more than mortal privilege.

This last extract points the way to a true understanding of Wordsworth's relation to the external world of nature. The outer world was to him the transparent veil through which Nature shines. Wordsworth lived in a world of life, by sensible impressions not enthralled, but quickened by their impulse. The daffodil the daisy, the skylark, the linnet offered him opportunities for drawing close to the Source. They make his heart dance with rapture because they flash upon his "inward eye." They are sweet silent creatures that breathe with him in sun and air. They share with him partnership in the great mystery.

C.

FIRST STEPS

THERE are many ways of doing a thing. Life is a series of different attempts to reach one goal—discipleship. Many do this consciously—most, unconsciously. To those who are earnestly seeking to see the Light, to serve humanity, and who for these reasons long to become disciples, there are given certain fixed laws and principles, a right understanding of which is the first task. Our western minds find some of these ideas very difficult to hold because of their strange flavor, and, what we call, peculiarly eastern turn. Chelaship to me used to mean something almost unnatural and foreign to the work of a real man. I wanted to be a disciple; yes, but not exactly that kind. I knew in my heart I could be one—though not, I thought, in *that* way—so there must be some other. Then I read the first volume of *Letters That Have Helped Me* where much is said about chelaship, and an account given of a self-constituted disciple that to me was most helpful and inspiring. In this Z says " Any person can constitute himself a lay chela," and again, "We *become* chelas." I think that in this lies the crux of the question. It is not a matter of going to India, or meeting one's Guru, it is a matter of *becoming* a disciple. We have to do it ourselves; we *have* to do it sooner or later; and until we have reached a certain point, we have no power or right to expect direct help. Maybe we have read Theosophy, maybe we do believe in the Lodge and the Masters, maybe we are weary of waiting, knowing we are not perfect, and wishing that "Time, the great deluder, were not so over-masterful;" but does that give us the right to expect a miracle, a sudden transformation; or the right to call on the great forces for good to give of themselves to us? Did merely wishing ever accomplish anything? And are we going to wait supinely for some change in us or in our lives?

We become chelas. We do not have to go to some Hall of Learning in the far East; but on the contrary, we must learn to act as chelas in our own homes before we can ever hope to go to such a place. True, we are not able to mediate all day with some beautiful mountain scenery just outside the window to inspire us—but *if* we were there *now,* would or could we mediate every day and all day? That is not yet our way. Our own homes can be our Halls of Learning, and once so constituted by ourselves, with oneself a chela within that Hall, the result will follow. For in very truth when we have done this we are lay chelas and the first step is taken. This vow being made with oneself, the next task is to find the best means of so ordering and conducting our lives as best to realize the ideal we may have formed of chelaship (however imaginary) because we shall most easily obey that. In any Lodge or even in any Monastic order there is strict discipline, enforced with military rigor.

But how is that discipline maintained? Surely not by any police system, where some servants of a Master spy on the chelas to see if they keep to their hours and do not eat too much. The chela on the contrary is left to himself, and when the time comes that he has completed the task set him, the Master knows it and so does the chela.

The duty we have before us is the discipline of the lower nature, so called; and to bring it under the complete control of the higher will. Whatever else we may do with ourselves, whether we "form an ideal" which Cavé says is the first step; whether we strive for obedience; whether we endeavor to reach the Master through meditation—all of these can only be maintained steadfastly, and finally accomplished successfully, by a constant pressure on our lower natures—by self-discipline. The average man disciplines himself very little. If he finds some fault preventing a promotion, he may strive to root it out, but he is not so rigid about faults in the home life; and as far as his inner thoughts are concerned, he is self-indulgence personified. A man usually gets his discipline from life—a chela must learn in addition to discipline himself. This does not imply asceticism, does not mean that a man should grind himself against a self-imposed mill-stone. Is it not reasonable that if he wishes to assume the responsibility to Nature for his acts, and wishes to perform those in the best way possible—he should now follow Nature's law in all its branches. Nature punishes mistakes. Nature teaches her greatest lessons through failure. So we should punish our mistakes, and *teach* ourselves by our punishments. Many people think they can learn a lesson even from a failure and escape the punishment. Often it seems so, and human nature has an unfortunate cleverness in avoiding for a time the consequences of its acts; but a day of retribution is sure to follow, when, because we suffer, we are grieved and feel ourselves unfairly treated. The chela strives to avoid this delay and he wishes to get a clearer insight into his faults by seeing more closely the effect of a given cause.

There are many ways of self-discipline. One of the first methods is to have a rule of life and to follow that. Chelas in the Lodge are required to make their own rules. If you wish to be a chela some day, try in your position as a lay chela to imitate that which they do. Make your own rule of life, and punish yourself when you break it. Teach yourself obedience by your self-imposed rule. You are coming closer to the Master every time you do this. How do you think you could obey some difficult and perhaps disagreeable order of the Master, if you could not exact at least partial obedience from your lower nature, could not make it do what it was told?

You may well say that a rule of conduct—a rule that would apply to all days and all circumstances, would be very difficult to draw up. It is; but in the Lodge, chelas have to do this; the Master does not at first give the chela a rule, he simply tells the chela to make one and obey

it. So sooner or later you will have to do it, and now is always the best time. This can be your next step if you make it so.

A rule should not be too complicated, or go too much into detail, because every day may bring unforseen accidents or changes. But certain fixed laws you *can* make for yourself and these you should hold to with all your might. Every rule I ever heard of requires at least one-half hour in the day for meditation or reading, preferably the morning, because you are refreshed by a night's sleep; and during sleep, we are told, the Higher Self receives instruction and strength. This half hour is difficult for a busy man to make, but it can be done. I know of one case where a young business man, who had to be at the office at seven-thirty, woke himself up every morning a half hour earlier than usual and sacrificed sleep to the call of duty. That was little enough to do, and yet how many would wake themselves at six every morning no matter when they went to bed or how tired they were? During that half-hour, read, pray, or meditate as best suits your temperament; but remember always that the time you chose should be thereafter strictly kept, and no change made without sufficient cause. Try to act as if that time were an engagement with the Master, try to realize his presence and think of him as near you and watching your every thought and effort with special closeness, because of that effort itself. Soon you would not miss your appointment with him for anything; and the benefit that you would get from a steady continuance of this rule would alter the whole atmosphere of your life. Try it and see.

In addition to this half-hour, many people find it a help and a reminder to appoint other times in the day such as may fit in with their personal schedule. At twelve, for instance, when all the clocks are striking and whistles blowing, you might agree with yourself to pause a moment and to recollect, to say a prayer, or to read some short paragraph in a religious book. Whatever leisure time you have should be carefully and systematically mapped out, every half hour having its appointed duty. That duty may be the reading of a novel or some other form of recreation, but once you decide to read from 9.30 to 10—*read,* and at ten stop, if so appointed, no matter what the hero is doing. Such discipline is the finest training, and is in the reach and possibility of any man no matter what his walk of life. Think out your duties carefully, and do not make your life a burden; but remember that what you are doing is being watched with the keenest interest and the greatest love, however unconscious you may be of it. Such a rule *is* the kind of a rule that exists in the Lodge, and the more earnest a seeker you are, the more truly you desire to learn, to know, to become—so much the more will you regulate your time and adhere to that which you have commenced. Until you have done this for a considerable time at least, until you have proved that you can be relied upon, you may not expect any special help. If you do follow such a course of action earnestly, steadfastly, rising above

disappointment and failure, you will most surely attract the attention you desire. Such efforts are too precious ever to be overlooked, though you can be no judge of the length of time that it should take before your reward may come.

As to your daily tasks that constitute your life's work at the time, whatever they are, home duties, business, teaching—these can only be governed by the motive and spirit you put into them. The "*quality* of work done makes no difference" says one of the Masters on this theme. Provided we have done our best, the result should not concern us. Learn to separate yourself from your work, in the sense that you do not let the work or its results have any hold on you. "So the student comes to see that he is not to do either 'Good' or 'Evil' (in the accepted sense), but to do any certain number of acts set before him, and meanwhile not ever to regard much his line of conduct, but rather his line of motive; for his conduct follows necessarily from his motive." That is the kind of task that is set a real chela, and you, if you desire, are just as capable of doing it as anyone.

As to punishments, do not make them merely disagreeable, but try to devise those that will help you to learn your lesson. Follow the old rule of cultivating the opposite virtue. If you are late getting up (and you should have a fixed hour for rising for many obvious reasons), then what was the fault? Sloth or laziness perhaps. Very well, punish yourself by being energetic, working a little overtime, being early for the other engagements during the day. By doing this you form good habits both of thought and deed, and presently you will almost spring out of bed when the time comes.

Such a rule could and should be made interesting. It should also be a matter of growth, because as you come to know yourself better you will learn how best to treat your lower nature. But be slow to make changes, and do not deceive yourself—the tempter always circumvents and takes us from behind. A straight frontal attack is rarely possible, because he is not there. In your higher moments use your cunning to devise ways of heading off defeat and failure, because all our faculties—not merely sheer will power—must be used in order to win this fight. We must make our minds help us when we can, because usually they are our worst enemy. The whole problem, for a beginner, lies in his mental attitude, and by the observance of a rule, the habits of the mind become regulated and trained to think in the right channels. Any man can impose this training on himself, and every man must, some day. This *is* discipleship.

This middle stage must eventually be recognized as the connecting link. There are, so to speak, three stages. There is the lonely seeker after truth, unaided save by the light of his conscience (which becomes the Master's voice as he progresses and learns to "hear" in the occult sense). There is the accepted chela, who is in conscious communion

with the Master. What lies between? Nothing but the conscious and prolonged effort to reach the higher by obtaining absolute control over the lower self. Otherwise we are left to the slow and painful grinding of the wheel of Time. Do not think that you have as yet to make a mighty effort, to strain every inner nerve to the bursting point in order to prove your right to become—it is the summation of little efforts that makes such a crisis possible. This is the law. And the Masters, the holy, patient, long suffering and tireless Masters themselves are the true and faithful servants of the law. Learn the law, learn to obey the law as it is expressed in your own sense of right and wrong, and you will be serving them. Never was service rendered them that was not rewarded in most generous measure; so that those who can dimly realize it, are filled with awe at such splendidly divine compassion. Every seeker, every worker, however humble, helps to carry the great burden; and the Masters wait—wait through the ages—pleadingly, hopefully, asking us just to listen, to accept, and to try a little. How many try, even a little?

CASPAR KALTOFF.

If you want knowledge you must toil for it; if food, you must toil for it; and if pleasure, you must toil for it. Toil is the law. Pleasure comes by toil and not by self-indulgence and indolence. When one gets to love work, his life is a happy one. RUSKIN.

BROTHERHOOD

THE principal object of the Theosophical Society has often been considered and often misunderstood. Its very simplicity renders it perplexing to the complex human mind, that marvelous deceiver. The simple sentence whose frequent misrepresentation has caused so much trouble in the history of the Theosophical Society, runs as follows: "To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color." In this sentence the chief word is *Brotherhood.* If the meaning and claim of "Brotherhood" were rightly understood by all members of the Theosophical Society, then even the possibility of betraying our first and principle object would be eliminated from our ranks. It is, therefore, worth while to give this matter sincere consideration and continual meditation. By "continual meditation" I mean that at every moment of our lives we should try to live up to our highest ideal of Brotherhood, physically, mentally and morally. As real knowledge comes from experience through living the life and not from hearsay, study or memory, so knowledge about Brotherhood comes to him who lives the life of Brotherhood.

But beware of the preconceptions and the intricacies of the lower psychic self. Live the life in humble fear of making mistakes; for the pitfalls are many, and the *unwary* will sooner or later find himself caught so cunningly that to him it seems as if he only were free, and those who do not share his views were the ones entrapped.

A Master gave us this advice: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Another said: "The mind is the great Slayer of the Real. Let the Disciple slay the Slayer." But these are mere words unless their inner meaning is understood and *practiced.*

He who has not entirely subdued the personality, the oppressor of the mind, is still under the enticing influence of lust and self-gratification —be it only in their subtler forms. He is still a denizen in the realm of illusion and error. Therefore, the disciple must be on his guard continually, watching attentively, fighting his lower self relentlessly, or else "like a bird caught in the wily fowler's lime, he will be stayed from further progress."

Much is written about Brotherhood in Philosophy, Theosophy, the Holy Scriptures and elsewhere. Seven of the Commandments are distinct behests of Brotherhood. So is the corresponding second great Commandment of the Lord Jesus: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The Gospels are filled with directions as to the right practise of Brotherhood, and the matter has frequently been commented on in theosophical literature. These things we can study for ourselves, and

most of us have done so, probably. We may even have, as we think, a clear conception of the nature and claim of Brotherhood upon us. Meanwhile, the question is a fundamental one for our work, and we can gain much by reviewing it from time to time.

Our object is to form the *nucleus* of Brotherhood. But a "nucleus" is something very powerful. It contains concentrated life. Every member of the Theosophical Society is supposed to add a little to the power of this life, and every member who tries to work faithfully, according to the principles of true Brotherhood, does so. But any member of the Theosophical Society who misrepresents these principles, brings a wrong force into the life of the Nucleus. He is directly counteracting the efforts of the others. And if in any Branch of the Society the wrong force is allowed to grow very powerful, the unavoidable result is the failure of that Branch. Thus, to have a clear conception of the nature of true Brotherhood, and how it ought to influence our lives, is of vital importance to the welfare of the Theosophical Society and of us all.

The tree is known by its fruits. What, then, are the fruits of the life-tree of Brotherhood?

Among people at large brotherliness is judged according to speech and action. Brotherly action and brotherly speech are, however, outer effects of inner causes, the resultant of our thoughts, desires, ambitions, vanities, and fears, or of the forces that oppress mind and heart. These powers constitute our inner or real life, whose expression in the outer world is largely determined by the will of the *oppressors*. And among the oppressors fear, ambition and self-love generally take the lead. They do not allow other forces to express themselves to such degree that their own special interests should suffer thereby. They are the clever computers that calculate results, the originators of our motives. They are the polishers of speech and action among people at large. Thus, just as delicious-looking fruit may have a bitter taste, so sweet speech and tender actions may be displayed by one whose heart is full of bitterness. There are unworthy imitations in all fields, and much of customary charitableness and philanthropic activity may be classed among the imitations.

If one has shown kindness in such a way that another is "uplifted" by it; *i. e.,* if the act has, be it only for a moment, roused in the heart a sensation of love and thankfulness, then he has indeed acted as a brother towards that other man. If, on the other hand, the kindness is shown, or the gift is handed in a manner that leaves the receiver cold and hard, or perhaps offends him, or causes an unpleasant feeling of indebtedness, then the draught offered our thirsty Brother was mixed with gall. We failed to give heed to our motives and to the real need of our Brother as well. Even if the selfishness of our motives be concealed to the outer sense the receiver will instinctively feel its presence, and it will poison his inner life.

The possibility of being misunderstood is of course always at hand. We may conscientiously try to act from correct principles and may earnestly wish to do what is right; but the subtler discernment which should help us to uplift instead of offending may be lacking. Our benevolence and sympathy are not strong and unselfish enough to induce the corresponding feelings in our Brother's heart. We can only gain these divine powers of discrimination and sympathy by long and attentive practice of charity according to our highest conception of the principles of Brotherhood.

And it must be remembered that principles are not outer appearances, but inner realities. They are impersonal, and, when applied to Brotherhood they call for justice in our dealings with individuals as well as with nations. They are opposed to doing injustice to any single human being, or even to ourselves, though it were for the alleged purpose of benefitting the whole race. And as inner realities they claim growth from within. A philanthropy that works for the benefit of man by trying to enforce laws and rules tending to improve the outer conditions of physical life, without due regard to individual rights and personal free will, may seem wise to the mind, but to the Soul, the Real Man, it is the opposite of wisdom. To work for the race on such lines is to try to bring about fair outer effects, while the corresponding inner conditions are as yet lacking. It is like making an artificial oak which always remains dead and therefore soon rots when exposed to the changes of the weather, instead of planting the healthy acorn, from which, by natural growth from within, a mighty tree may develop, powerful enough to resist climatic change.

Those who call themselves Theosophists, who wish to label philanthropic work on material lines as theosophical, and claim sympathetic interest in the name of Brotherhood, ought to remember that the inner conditions will unavoidably call forth the corresponding outer circumstances, just as the rate of vibration of a string decides the pitch of the audible tone produced. And they ought also to take into consideration the fact that the improvement of outer conditions may have just the opposite effect on the inner life, and make it more difficult for the race to give up earthly enjoyments and turn mind and heart from the mortal to the immortal. Charity must of course be practised within the Theosophical Society as well as in the outer world, and as citizens we may join in any philanthropic activity that attracts us; but it is advisable, before we spend time and energy in it, to analyze closely the nature and motives for such work and its effects on those we wish to benefit.

In the *Bhagavad Gita,* Chapter 17, we find a description of that speech and of those gifts that spring from the three qualities of nature. It may be worth while to study this chapter in order to find out which quality is predominating in our own speech and gifts.

It is said that if only a glass of water be offered to a thirsty Brother

with love and sympathy, this act of kindness will produce a feeling of warmth and thankfulness in that Brother's heart, thus touching the life of the soul which is to be found beyond the outer life of every human being. Perhaps, till then, the life of this soul in its present incarnation had had little, if any, conscious contact with the soul-life of others. Perhaps in this incarnation it had never had a conscious feeling of relationship to other souls or an idea of its oneness with all souls in the Over-Soul. Perhaps it had been like a closed-up underground sea. And perhaps, by our seemingly insignificant brotherly action, we have given to this sea an outlet and have caused its waters to flow more or less abundantly, thus making a Brother's life richer and more fruitful. This is the *uplifting* of a Brother; this is the practise of true Brotherhood.

Therefore, charity must be practised in due time and place and on the right principles, and our gift, be it only a glass of water, must be followed by that strong sympathy which flows from the feeling in our hearts that every fellowman, even the meanest and most degraded among us, is a human soul and as such our equal, nay, even more than that, a part of ourselves through our unity in the One Soul. Every human soul is a Brother whose fate is not independent of ours,—a Brother whose keeper each one of us is in a very real sense.

Gentleness of speech is one of the most prevalent injunctions of all founders of religion. The perfection of this virtue is, in *Light on the Path,* described in this way: "Before the voice can speak in the presence of the Masters it must have lost its power to wound." This saying is hardly understood by many, and it is hardly possible to explain it intelligibly in words. Everyone has to find out for himself what it means to him. To some it might seem synonymous with silence or as an encouragement to hypocrisy. We know better; but we are, nevertheless, puzzled when trying to determine the true meaning of this highly spiritual exhortation. We are not told to deal loosely with truth, but to be sympathetic. The truth can be told in many ways, and the best way is that which does not wound.

Meanwhile, experience testifies constantly that people are disposed to resent words that stir their consciences, even if spoken in the abstract. In this case, however, the real cause of offence is not in the speaker, but in the listener's alarmed conscience.

It is said: "Judge not," and "Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? . . . Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." If we live up to this injunction we shall never run the risk of needlessly offending anyone, because there will be left us no opportunity to reproach others, until there is nothing more to blame in ourselves. And for most of us this condition will be found to be very far off, if our own self-examination be unfeigned and thorough.

The above quoted injunction does not forbid us, when discussing theosophical and other questions, to point out wherein we think another is wrong. This is a matter of opinion, and his views may after all be better than our own. We have only to discuss the question in a brotherly spirit and to show tolerance. It is, as we know, one of the purposes of the Theosophical Society to form a platform for free and tolerant discussion.

This does not mean that we are never to correct faults. It may be our duty to do so in many cases in domestic and social life. Thus it is the duty of parents towards their children, and of teachers towards their pupils. And we are often in the position of teachers, *e.g.*, when we are superiors or when a fellowman of his own free will is asking our advice and guidance. Our instruction must, however, under all circumstances, be given with kindness and sympathy. Then if the pupil objects openly or secretly to instruction, it is his fault. He does not understand, perhaps, because no one has told him, that there exists a sacred relationship between him and his natural or chosen teacher. And even if the judgment of the present teacher does not help to solve our difficulties, and even if his instruction seems to be lacking in the spirit of love and sympathy, still we ought to listen to him attentively and with thankfulness, because he *is* our temporary teacher, natural or chosen, in that special case, and he gives what he can, according to his inner disposition. And though the love and sympathy should be mutual between teacher and pupil, the absence of these qualities in one of them is no proper excuse for their absence in the other. This applies especially to those who wish to live the life according to the doctrine of the Heart.

If, on the other hand, we are not in the position of a teacher, then we have no right whatever to correct the real or supposed deficiencies of others; when we make that attempt, experience shows, if we only have the power to look deeply enough into the inner life,—that we have aggravated the condition of the friend, who is the object of our improper instruction.

Besides, when inclined to correct faults in another without being in the position of his teacher, we ought to remember, that our views are not infallible, and that as a rule it is better and more instructive for our Brother to act upon his own conviction instead of blindly following the views of another. It is also wise to examine into our motives in order to see whether our kind intention to improve him may not be a secret prompting of the personality to self-assertion.

The principles of true Brotherhood demand readiness to give and to receive personal help and advice, when it is our duty to do so, but not otherwise. And, as pointed out above, it is our duty, only when we are in the position of teacher or pupil. In all other cases the best way to help is by example.

If we do not judge anyone, nor have aught against anyone, but

always think of our fellowmen with love and sympathy, then we can never feel inclined to tell them of their faults, nor to backbite or to give hints about any of their real or supposed failings. To expose deficiencies in a man's character is even more unbecoming than to point at some bodily disfigurement. The personal human Psyche must be treated with more consideration than its earthly apparition, the body.

When we are aware of faults in another, then we have only to try to look for our own. This will give much insight into human nature. And instead of telling our comrades their faults we should warn them in the abstract against the vices and deficiencies predominent in ourselves and in the world. But there is no occasion to confess our own faults, nor to expose others. We owe respect to ourselves as well as to our fellowmen.

Then we have to make right the inner attitude towards others. This aspect of brotherliness has already been mentioned, because the right inner attitude is inseparable from right action and right speech, unless action and speech are base hypocrisy only. People of good breeding are supposed to behave gently towards others, whether they like or dislike them. But the disciple must overcome that sensation of dislike, and the remedy is to look to the soul of the person who causes this unbrotherly feeling. Dislike must be replaced by sympathetic comprehension.

The twin-brother of dislike is suspicion, and this is perhaps the most fatal of all our moral defects because of its proneness to cause misunderstanding, to misinterpret, to multiply, to color and even to make evidence out of nothing. If suspicion is not throttled, it will kill our sympathy towards that person whom we distrust. We must replace suspicion with confidence. Then if we are deceived sometimes, we should again look to the soul of the deceiver, and our disappointment will be stripped of its bitterness, because we shall feel the sufferings of that soul, and compassion and warm sympathy for it will fill our hearts, just as the mother's heart is filled with love and compassion for her suffering child.

There are many more defects in our inner attitude towards our fellowmen, but as they can all be abolished by the universal remedy, *warm sympathy* towards all, we need not go into further details. Besides, the two—dislike and suspicion—cover the whole range. And if suspicion and dislike are replaced by trust and sympathy, then the inner attitude of true Brotherhood is already established.

So in all our relations to our fellowmen the all-important aim is to be guided by that uniting power which flows from warm sympathy. It is just here that so many fail, even some of those who strive for perfection in true Brotherhood. Meanwhile, to exercise self-control is very difficult, since a fault, when its grosser aspects are conquered, always tries to assert itself afresh in a subtler way. We can, therefore, never

be too particular in our self-examination. We must dig deeper and deeper into our innermost recesses, and we must at the same time remember that human nature is *one* with the whole of Nature and therefore as extensive. Then we shall understand how necessary it is to be on guard, and that our keeping watch must be continued throughout the whole range of the incarnations of the soul, or till it has once more become one with the Father in Heaven.

To recapitulate: Brotherhood demands of us that we should never judge anyone, never have aught against anyone, never find fault or feel inclined to expose the deficiencies of others. And the principal reason is, that every fellowman without exception is a soul, our equal in being and dignity and one with our soul through our common origin in the Universal Soul. This oneness of the soul is the rationale and the fundamental principle of Universal Brotherhood, the nature and the demands of which I have tried to sketch as they present themselves to me. If we accept these principles and make them the standard of our lives, *i.e.,* if we try to draw men to us with love and sympathy, then we shall come in touch with their souls and set into activity corresponding powers in their lives. We are then true workers in the divine vineyard and co-workers with Nature which exists for the purposes of the soul only.

But while we are trying to live the life of Brotherhood we shall find that when the fire of ungoverned passion has been quenched, and the life of the personality is flowing smoother, there is still self-love in its subtler aspects parting us from our fellowmen. There is the fear of being dwarfed by others, the craving for self-assertion is yet powerful, sensitiveness in our daily intercourse with others, inclination to feel hurt if our opinions are not esteemed as much as we desire, some small suspicions as to the uprightness of others—in all these ways the personality tries to keep up its separate existence, and all are evidences of the fact that we still love ourselves more than our neighbours. And if there arise, be it only as a flash in our inner life, a sensation towards even the meanest of our fellowmen, which cannot be classed as warm sympathy, then we may be sure that there is still something for us to overcome.

The demands of Brotherhood are very exacting, few are able to live the life of true Brotherhood to perfection if only for a single day, or for a single hour. But we are all able to *try* to live that life, and by so doing we are adding a little to the power and life of the nucleus of Universal Brotherhood, which it is the purpose of our Society to create. By endeavouring to make the principles of true Brotherhood a living power in our lives, we are gradually advancing nearer to that sublime goal of being, which it is our hope and aspiration one day to reach. By our warm sympathy for others we shall draw them to us, thus helping them and making it easier for them to overcome the obstacles that are

yet to be removed in their long and weary journey to the mansions of Truth.

To be allowed to partake in this uplifting work is a great trust, a great privilege, and we ought not to fail in doing our duty to the best of our ability. Our duties and our work seem to be laid before us more clearly and more intelligibly than ever before. We have only to work on. We are, no doubt, all of us willing to carry out our part of the work, but the flesh is frail and the possibility of failure is not far off. Meanwhile, the Master who is watching every one of us, is far more anxious to help us than we are to receive help. We may call this Master the Spirit of Truth. It remains only for us to make our hearts and inner lives susceptible of his guidance. In order to do this we must be attentive listeners to that inaudible voice which speaks to us when we have silenced the clamor of body and mind,—the voice of the Conscience. It is the Genius of man that is ever trying to break through the clouds surrounding the personality and to manifest in the outer world. It is the promised guide to Truth who shall lead us from darkness to that wonderful light that illumines the world of righteousness and of true Brotherhood.

T. H. KNOFF.

Wisdom is only knowing what is best to do next. Virtue is doing it. DAVID STARR JORDAN.

PATANJALI'S YOGA SUTRAS *

TRANSLATED WITH A COMMENTARY

By

Charles Johnston

THE last part of the last book needs little introduction. In a sense, it is the most important part of the whole treatise, since it unmasks the nature of the personality, that psychical "mind," which is the wakeful enemy of all who seek to tread the path. Even now, you can hear it whispering the doubt whether that can be a good path, which thus sets "mind" at defiance.

If this, then, be the most vital and fundamental part of the teaching, should it not stand first at the very beginning? Reader, it may seem so; but had it stood there, you would not have comprehended it. The riddle of personality cannot be so lightly read. If you have faithfully followed what has gone before, and wrought it, as you would be wise to do, into the fabric of your life, then you have already come to grips with personality, and gained, let us hope, some preliminary victories.

If you have done this, you are now in a position to understand the broad outlines of the teaching now set before you. If not, go back over it, for the record of the teaching is extant, and ready to your hand; and the task and the foe are also ready to your hand; likely, indeed, so to remain for some time yet. Therefore you can set about your lesson, and wage your fight. And thus you will truly learn. For he who would know the doctrine must lead the life, doing the will of his Father which is in Heaven.

Translation of Book IV, Part II

18. The movements of the psychic nature are perpetually objects of perception, since the Spiritual Man, who is the lord of them, remains unchanging.

Here is teaching of the utmost import, both for understanding and for practice.

To the psychic nature belongs all the ebb and flow of emotion, all hoping and fearing, desire and hate: the things that make the multitude of men and women deem themselves happy or miserable. To it also belong the measuring and comparing, the doubt and questioning, which, for the same multitude, make up mental life. So that there results the emotion-soaked personality, with its dark and narrow view of life: the

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shivering, terror-driven personality that is life itself for all but all of mankind.

Yet the personality is not the true man, not the living soul at all, but only a spectacle which the true man observes. Understand this, therefore, and draw yourself up inwardly to the height of the Spiritual Man, who, standing in the quiet light of the Eternal, looks down serene upon this turmoil of the outer life.

One first masters the personality, the "mind," by thus looking down on it from above, from within; by steadily watching its ebb and flow, as objective, outward, and therefore not the real Self. This standing back is the first step, detachment. The second, to maintain the vantage-ground thus gained, is recollection.

19. The Mind is not self-luminous, since it can be seen as an object.

This is a further step toward overthrowing the tyranny of the "mind": the psychic nature of emotion and mental measuring. This psychic self, the personality, claims to be absolute, asserting that life is for it and through it; it seeks to impose on the whole being of man its narrow, materialistic, faithless view of life and the universe; it would fain clip the wings of the soaring Soul. But the Soul dethrones the tyrant, by perceiving and steadily affirming that the psychic self is no true self at all, not self-luminous, but only an object of observation, watched by the serene eyes of the Spiritual Man.

20. Nor could the Mind at the same time know itself and things external to it.

The truth is that the "mind" knows neither external things nor itself. Its measuring and analysing, its hoping and fearing, hating and desiring, never give it a true measure of life, nor any sense of real values. Ceaselessly active, it never really attains to knowledge; or, if we admit its knowledge, it ever falls short of wisdom, which comes only through intuition, the vision of the Spiritual Man.

Life cannot be known by the "mind," its secrets cannot be learned through the "mind." The proof is, the ceaseless strife and contradiction of opinion among those who trust in the mind. Much less can the "mind" know itself, the more so, because it is pervaded by the illusion that it truly knows, truly is.

True knowledge of the "mind" comes, first, when the Spiritual Man, arising, stands detached, regarding the "mind" from above, with quiet eyes, and seeing it for the tangled web of psychic forces that it truly is. But the truth is divined long before it is clearly seen, and then begins the long battle of the "mind" against the Real, the "mind" fighting furiously, craftily, for its supremacy. Its honor rooted in dishonor stands, and faith unfaithful makes it falsely true.

21. If the Mind be thought of as seen by another more inward Mind, then there would be an endless series of perceiving Minds, and a confusion of memories.

One of the expedients by which the "mind" seeks to deny and thwart the Soul, when it feels that it is beginning to be circumvented and seen through, is to assert that this seeing is the work of a part of itself, one part observing the other, and thus leaving no need nor place for the Spiritual Man.

To this strategy the argument is opposed by our philosopher, that this would be no true solution, but only a postponement of the solution. For we should have to find yet another part of the Mind to view the first observing part, and then another to observe this, and so on, endlessly.

The true solution is, that the Spiritual Man looks down upon the psychic nature, and observes it; when it views the psychic picture-gallery, this is "memory," which would be a hopeless, inextricable confusion, if we thought of one part of the "mind," with its memories, viewing another part, with memories of its own.

The solution of the mystery lies not in the "mind" but beyond it, in the luminous life of the risen Lord, the Spiritual Man.

22. When the pure Spiritual Consciousness, which is free from all succession or change, takes form in the Spiritual Man, then does Consciousness realize its own luminous being.

True individuality is never reached in the "mind," the psychic being, with its ceaseless ebb and flow, its hating and desiring, fearing and hoping, mapping and measuring. That fluctuating being is no real self. The man is not yet born.

But when the Spiritual Man wins his long battle against the "mind," and the mind's world-view, and, rising, stands firm in his own might, then true life and individuality begin. Abstract spiritual Consciousness comes to a focus, as it were, in a real being, a true individuality, who neither fears nor hopes, but knows himself immortal, one of the Children of Light.

23. The psychic nature, universally adaptive, takes on the color either of things seen, or of the Seer.

In the unregenerate man, the psychic nature is saturated with images of material things, of things seen, or heard, or tasted, or felt; and this web of dynamic images forms the ordinary material and driving power of life. The sensation of sweet things tasted clamors to be renewed, and drives the man into effort to obtain its renewal; so he adds image to image, each dynamic and importunate, piling up sin's intolerable burden.

Then comes regeneration, and the washing away of sin, through the fiery, creative power of the Soul, which burns out the stains of the

psychic vesture, purifying it as gold is refined in the furnace. The suffering of regeneration springs from this indispensable purifying.

Then the psychic vesture begins to take on the color of the Soul, no longer stained, but suffused with golden light; and the man regenerate gleams with the radiance of eternity. Thus the Spiritual Man puts on fair raiment; for of this cleansing it is said: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be as crimson, they shall be as wool.

24. The psychic nature, which has been printed with mind-images of innumerable material things, exists now for the Spiritual Man, subordinate to him.

The "mind," once the tyrant, is now the slave, recognized as outward, separate, not-Self, a well-trained instrument of the Spiritual Man.

For it is not ordained for the Spiritual Man that, finding his high realm, he shall enter altogether there, and pass out of the vision of mankind. It is true that he dwells in heaven, but he also dwells on earth. He has angels and archangels, the hosts of the just made perfect, for his familiar friends, but he has at the same time found a new kinship with the prone children of men, who stumble and sin in the dark. Finding sinlessness, he finds also that the world's sin and shame are his, not to share, but to atone; finding kinship with angels, he likewise finds his part in the toil of angels, the toil for the redemption of the world.

For this work, he, who now stands in the heavenly realm, needs his instrument on earth; and this instrument he finds, ready to his hand, and fitted and perfected by the very struggles he has waged against it, in the personality, the "mind" of the personal man. This once tyrant is now his servant and perfect ambassador, bearing witness, before men, of heavenly things, and even in this present world doing the will and working the works of the Father.

25. For him who discerns between the Mind and the Spiritual Man, there comes perfect fruition of the longing after the real being of the Self.

How many times in the long struggle have the Soul's aspirations seemed but a hopeless, impossible dream, a madman's counsel of perfection. Yet every finest, most impossible aspiration shall be realized, and ten times more than realized, once the long, arduous fight against the "mind," and the mind's world-view is won. And then it will be seen that unfaith and despair were but weapons of the "mind," to daunt the Soul, and put off the day when the neck of the "mind" shall be put under the foot of the Soul.

Have you aspired, well-nigh hopeless, after immortality? You shall be paid by entering the immortality of God.

Have you aspired, in misery and pain, after consoling, healing love?

You shall be made a dispenser of the divine love of God Himself to weary souls.

Have you sought ardently, in your day of feebleness, after power? You shall wield power immortal, infinite, with God working the works of God.

Have you, in lonely darkness, longed for companionship and consolation? You shall have angels and archangels for your friends, and all the immortal hosts of the Dawn.

These are the fruits of victory. Therefore overcome. These are the prizes of regeneration. Therefore die to self, that you may rise again to God.

26. Thereafter, the whole personal being bends toward illumination, full of the spirit of Eternal Life.

This is part of the secret of the Soul, that salvation means, not merely that a soul shall be cleansed and raised to heaven, but that the whole realm of the natural powers shall be redeemed, building up, even in this present world, the kingly figure of the Spiritual Man.

The traditions of the ages are full of his footsteps; majestic, uncomprehended shadows, myths, demi-gods, fill the memories of all the nobler peoples. But the Time cometh, when he shall be known, no longer demi-god, nor myth, nor shadow, but the ever-present Redeemer, working amid men for the life and cleansing of all souls.

27. In the intervals of the battle, other thoughts will arise, through the impressions of the dynamic mind-images.

The battle is long and arduous. Let there be no mistake as to that. Go not forth to this battle without counting the cost. Ages have gone to the strengthening of the foe. Ages of conflict must be spent, ere the foe, wholly conquered, becomes the servant, the Soul's minister to mankind.

And from these long past ages, in hours when the contest flags, will come new foes, mind-born children springing up to fight for mind, reinforcements coming from forgotten years, forgotten lives. For once this conflict is begun, it can be ended only by sweeping victory, and unconditional, unreserved surrender of the vanquished.

28. These are to be overcome as it was taught that sorrows should be overcome.

These new enemies and fears are to be overcome by ceaselessly renewing the fight, by a steadfast, dogged persistence, whether in victory or defeat, which shall put the stubbornness of the rocks to shame. For the Soul is older, more invincible than all things; it is of the very nature of the Soul to be unconquerable.

Therefore fight on, undaunted; knowing that the spiritual will, once

awakened, will, through the effort of the contest, come to its full strength; that ground gained can be held permanently; that great as is the dead-weight of the adversary, it is yet measurable, while he who fights for you, he for whom you fight, is in might immeasurable, invincible, everlasting.

29. He who, after he has attained, is wholly free from self, is set in a cloud of holiness which is called illumination. This is the true spiritual consciousness.

It has been said that, at the beginning of the way, we must kill out ambition, the great curse, the giant weed which grows as strongly in the heart of the devoted disciple as in the man of desire. The remedy is sacrifice of self, obedience, humility; that purity of heart which gives the vision of God. Thereafter, he who has attained is wrapt about with holiness, as with a cloud; he has that perfect illumination which is the true spiritual consciousness. Through obedience to the will of God, he comes into oneness of being with God; he is initiated into God's view of the universe, seeing all life as God sees it.

30. Thereon comes surcease from sorrow and the burden of toil.

Such a one, it is said, is free from the bond of Karma, from the burden of toil, from that debt to works which comes from works done in self-love and desire. Free from self-will, he is free from sorrow, too, for sorrow comes from the fight of self-will against the divine will, through the correcting stress of the divine will, which seeks to counteract the evil wrought by disobedience. When the conflict with the divine will ceases, then sorrow ceases, and he who has grown into obedience, thereby enters into joy.

31. When all veils are rent, all stains washed away, his knowledge becomes infinite; little remains for him to know.

The first veil is the delusion that thy soul is in some permanent way separate from the great Soul, the divine Eternal. When that veil is rent, thou shalt discern thy oneness with everlasting Life. The second veil is the delusion of enduring separateness from thy other selves, whereas in truth the soul that is in them is one with the soul that is in thee. The world's sin and shame are thy sin and shame: its joy also.

These veils rent, thou shalt enter into knowledge of divine things and human things. Little will remain unknown to thee.

32. Thereafter comes the completion of the series of transformations of the three nature-potencies, since their purpose is attained.

It is a part of the beauty and wisdom of the great Indian teachings, the Vedanta and the Yoga alike, to hold that all life exists for the purposes of Soul, for the making of the Spiritual Man. They do not teach

a salvation which is preternatural, a seeming violation of the course of nature, nor a salvation which comes through a divine decree, almost a divine whim. They teach rather that all nature is an orderly process of evolution, leading up to this, designed for this end, existing only for this: to bring forth and perfect the Spiritual Man. He is the crown of evolution; at his coming, the goal of all development is attained.

33. The series of transformations is divided into moments, and is to be regarded as the culmination of nature.

This is, perhaps, a philosophical subtlety, later inserted in the teaching, in fuller expansion of the words "series of transformations" in the last sûtra. The idea, however, is clear, and is wholly in harmony with the rest of the teaching. There are two kinds of eternity, says the commentary: the eternity of immortal life, which belongs to the Spirit, and the eternity of change, which inheres in Nature; in all that is not Spirit. While we are content to live in and for Nature, in the Circle of Necessity, Sansara, we doom ourselves to perpetual change. That which is born must die, and that which dies must be reborn. It is change evermore, a ceaseless series of transformations.

But the Spiritual Man enters a new order; for him, there is no longer eternal change, but eternal Being. He has entered into the joy of his Lord. This spiritual birth, which makes him the heir of the Everlasting, sets a term to change; it is the culmination, the crowning transformation, of the whole realm of change.

34. Pure spiritual life is, therefore, the inverse resolution of the potencies of Nature, which have emptied themselves of their value for the Spiritual Man; or it is the return of the power of pure Consciousness to its essential form.

Here we have a splendid generalization, in which our wise philosopher finally reconciles the naturalists and the idealists, expressing the crown and end of his teaching first in the terms of the naturalist, and then in the terms of the idealist.

The birth and growth of the Spiritual Man, and his entering into his immortal heritage, may be regarded, says our philosopher, either as the culmination of the whole process of natural evolution and involution, where "that which flowed from out the boundless deep, turns again home"; or it may be looked at, as the Vedantins look at it, as the restoration of pure spiritual Consciousness to its pristine and essential form. There is no discrepancy or conflict between these two views, which are but two accounts of the same thing. Therefore those who study the wise philosopher, be they naturalist or idealist, have no excuse to linger over dialectic subtleties or disputes. These things are lifted from their path, lest they should be tempted to delay over them, and

they are left facing the path itself, stretching upward and outward from their feet to the everlasting hills, radiant with infinite Light.

You, too, reader, who have followed the thoughts of the wise philosopher, be persuaded to take to your heart a like counsel and admonition. The path is for you. The Spiritual Man waits to be revealed in you, to initiate you into immortality, setting you amid the Children of Light. Be persuaded, then, since the truth is before you, the holy message has come to your ears. Hear the message, know that through it alone is life, leave the shadows of yourself behind, enter the Light, and hear the ringing Welcome that awaits you.

THE END

Must we always be warned, and can we only fall on our knees when some one is there to tell us that God is passing by? If you have loved profoundly you have needed no one to tell you that your soul was a thing as great in itself as the world; that the stars, the flowers, the waves of night and sea were not solitary; that it was on the threshold of appearances that everything began, but nothing ended; and that the very lips you kissed belonged to a creature who was loftier, much purer and much more beautiful than the one whom your arms enfolded. You have beheld that which in life cannot be seen without ecstasy. But can not we live as though we always loved? It was this that the saints and heroes did, this and nothing more.

MAURICE MAETERLINCK.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

A Talk on Occultism

"TO make us happy: that is the Master's aim," said the Sage; "and He wants us to be happy for the very simple reason that He loves us. It would help, at times, if we were to discard all these big and formidable words such as Duty, Discipline, Saintliness, Adeptship, Self-sacrifice, and were to understand that it is a problem of Love. On the one side, a very loving and wise Father and Friend, who longs for the happiness of his children. We, on the other side, who are his children, should not find it difficult to credit him with greater love and wisdom than our own; so that we ought to be able to submit our wills to his, not as if it were some terrifying sacrifice, but with deep and abiding gratitude that he cares enough for us to accept the burden of our weakness."

The Objector interrupted. "You cannot deny," he said, "that much of what we have to do, either directly or indirectly, at some Master's request, has the imprint and feeling of sacrifice; and, if it feels like sacrifice, it is useless, so far as I can see, to call it by another name."

"Suppose you have a child," replied the Sage, "whom you love devotedly. A stranger says of him that he hasn't enough sense to come in out of the rain. You say that your child is 'very young.' Well, it rains. Your child plays on—wetting his feet and enjoying the wetting. You call to him to come indoors. He wants to stay where he is. But if he loves you, he will come gladly for love of you. If he loves his moment's pleasure better than he loves you, he will grumble and feel that you are 'hard'; and, if he knows so big a word, he will describe his obedience as 'self-sacrifice'—in which case the stranger will label him 'an odious little prig'! If your child were old enough, in actual understanding, he might think of earlier experiences and tell himself that you, his father, are wise and right, and might even be grateful for your reminder: because his understanding, at that age, might be on the side of his love and his will. But the point is that, even without understanding, sufficient love and trust would eliminate the word 'sacrifice' from our vocabulary. You can see it in the case of the child. Why not in your own case?"

"Listen"—and the Sage leaned forward eagerly: "the Master, who loves us, knows that selfishness means misery. He wants us to be happy. He wants us to surrender self as a necessary preliminary to our happiness. We cling to misery and think it terrible when he begs us to surrender it. You may say that a man is entitled to his misery if he prefers it. He is. But love and wisdom see more deeply—as a father

sees beneath and beyond his child's immediate fancy. Love does not recognize another's right to misery. Yet the Master cannot and will not use force. That would interfere with a man's free will. To some extent, help must be asked before it can be given. So the Master pleads with us—begging us to ask him for his help."

"I have known cases," said the Philosopher, "in which a man's own prayers were too feeble or too spasmodic to make sufficient help possible; of his own accord he could not generate enough desire, enough energy, to give the Master the leverage he needed. And then the prayers of a friend have done for him what the man alone, as man, was only partly desirous of doing (you remember St. Augustine and his mother St. Monica). Such prayers of love, which are most potent energy, have enabled the Master to force a man, almost against the will of his lower personal consciousness, out of one environment into a better, or, more often, have enabled the Master to reach and to melt a heart which had nearly turned to stone. . . . It is well to remember this, because the extent to which we can help one another by prayer is almost unbelievable. I have to remind myself of it constantly so as to keep myself up to the mark, both in practice and in gratitude to others."

"Testimony," remarked the Student, rather shyly, after a pause, "good old-fashioned testimony, is out of date. But I am not going to be happy in my conscience unless I say something, from actual experience, of the Master's love. The very fact of being a Master must imply a quality and intensity of love, beyond our power to imagine. Consequently, what is true of one of them must in some way be true of all—widely as the expression of their love is known to differ. But the Master of whom I speak has a tenderness of consideration, a delicacy of feeling, a passion of human interest in the details of his disciples' lives, that are like the peace which passeth understanding. The sense of such love should fill one with an ecstacy of adoration far greater than that of an artist for marvellous physical beauty. I could give many illustrations of what I mean, out of my own experience—just as most of you could give similar illustrations out of your own. But for the very reason that his method is so intensely personal, the instances of it are too personal to relate. There is no department of life with which he is not concerned; no aspirant for discipleship in whose welfare he does not take an interest more loving than any mother ever felt for her dearest child. In courtliness and charm of manner, he eclipses the most polished diplomat, for he is never artificial; is never anything less than the ultimate perfection of considerateness. Yet, because his love is boundless, he can withhold as well as give; can be stern as well as gentle; can cut as surely as he can heal. His voice, for instance, which is music itself, can tell of age-long yearning, of uttermost compassion: yet it can be terrible in command; awe-compelling in its majesty. Always the embodiment of love, there is no human need with which he does not sympathize. Kings

would do well to pray for his King's heart; lovers, for his adoration of all that is lovely; statesmen for his insight; but the child of the slums might envy and pray for his capacity to find joy in simple things and for his interest in the insignificant."

The Gael is a natural rhetorician. The slightest suggestion of "studied periods" grates on his nerves. The Student had allowed himself to declaim the faith that is in him. So the Gael:

"What you have been saying is too abstract. If there is the slightest danger of the Recorder using this talk of ours in the *Screen* (I never read it, but some people may), the first question to decide is: What is the purpose of our talk? We have been drifting from the point of the Sage's original remark,—which we have a perfect right to do: but is that what we want?"

"Surely," said the Student, rather in self-defense,—"Surely everyone would love the Master if they knew how marvellously lovable he is. To speak of his qualities cannot fail to inspire others with love for him—and that, as I see it, was the point of the Sage's remark."

"But you are mistaken in your premise," persisted the Gael. "You know what idiots most people are. If they had heard what you have been saying about the Master, many of them would feel, 'No one like *that* could love *me!*' And they would turn away in despair. Others would not feel anything: there would be no point of contact. You have made your picture a shade more human than the ordinary portrayal of a Master,—say, for instance, of Christ—but it would impress most people as unreal. We ought to be able, between us, to hit upon something which will help the average reader to feel, as he has never felt before, that *his* Master (whether Christ or Buddha or another) loves him personally; and by that means or some other, we ought to be able to evoke in him a greater love for that Master than he has thought of before as possible. Children love because they are loved. They do not love abstractions. They do not say, 'This is my father and therefore I love him.' They say, 'Dear father, who loves me—what a dear father he is.' You must begin, then, in my opinion, by persuading people to believe that they are loved. They will admit, perhaps, that they would like to be loved by so wonderful a being as you have described—many would admit that. They would like to know him as their friend, to be able to turn to him as guide, to rely upon his ability and wish to help them always, and particularly they would like to feel themselves truly and unselfishly and passionately loved. Why not tell them the fact?—that their wish, which they regard as their own, is merely their response to what already is: that it is merely the reflection, within themselves, of what their Master for so long has given them! In other words, their desire is proof of possession. . . . Some of them will remain incredulous. They will say—'That is all right as an argument; but I know what I am; I know my faults; I know how unworthy I am of such love:

you cannot persuade me!' And they will plant their two front feet with a sense of immovable humility. It would be useless to beat them, or to break their heads: so try this—ask them whether a mother, who finds infinite delight in music, cares less for her baby because he (if it is a he) is unable all at once to read a Beethoven sonata. If the suggestion be regarded as absurd, why not see also the absurdity of supposing that a Master loves us less, because we are so wretchedly immature?"

"I am not disputing the validity of your argument," commented the Philosopher; "but I doubt whether argument ever convinced anyone of anything. You may retort that the barrier, in the case of these people, is a mental barrier—a preconceived prejudice which, by mental means, must be removed. And I know there is truth in that view. Ultimately, however, the belief or disbelief of others is in our own hands—is in the hands of all those who claim to know something about the wonder of a Master's love, and who venture to speak of it. For a tree is judged by its fruits: if we believe ourselves to be loved, how does that belief affect our conduct? Are we happier, less selfish, more considerate, more courageous, than those are who do not believe as we do? Are we wiser and better; more sane and more loving? It is the life that convinces,—not the argument."

"Dear man," replied the Gael; "of course you are right. But we were speaking for the benefit of the Recorder: we were pandering to his abominable habit of lying down on us at the last minute with a howl to Heaven for 'copy' for the *Screen*. And he cannot convince others of the truth by describing himself as a man of unblemished virtue, nor even by using so striking an example as myself: there is a limit to human credence, and the trouble is that these unfortunate people may never have the advantage of meeting the Recorder, or of seeing him as he sees himself. Just imagine the difficulties! We are compelled to argue about it; and really it is the Recorder's fault,—not mine."

They smiled. And the Gael's jokes are so obvious that I doubt if they do him any harm. Besides, the Sage did not leave time for reply. "There is one point," he remarked, "which the Gael suggested, but which he did not cover sufficiently. It is true, as he said, that some people are repelled rather than attracted by the presentation of an ideal beyond their grasp or their hope of realization. The Christian ideal has been nullified often in this way: Jesus has been portrayed as so far removed from humanity that he might as well be an inhabitant of Mars. His worshippers, by excess of zeal, and by insisting only upon his divinity, have reduced him to the position of 'a woman's god'—an outrage that makes me furious: that Man of men! Perfection there is; but the manner of the perfection has been misunderstood. Why not use that misunderstanding so as to create the point of contact between perfection and imperfection which imperfection needs for its contentment? The

real point of contact, naturally, lies in the soul; but, until the soul has gained considerable footing—until there is some true life in the heart—the barriers of the mind count for much. Show, as existing in perfection, that which imperfection would regard as weakness, and you may arouse that sort of pity which should lead to love, when the object of it is worthy. (Be it understood, though, in parenthesis, that the last vestige of pity must be eliminated before true love can live. Pity looks down. Love looks up. Finally, and in its perfection, it looks on the same level. Pity, at a lower stage of development, serves as a step in the direction of sympathy; and sympathy of the right kind is one of the elements of love.)

"Perhaps Christ had that in view when speaking to a nun of the Visitation, in the seventeenth century (I am supposing that the published records are correct). You may remember that over and over again he told her how bitterly he suffers because of the ingratitude of men; that, if only they would love him, he would feel rewarded for all he had ever endured for love of them; that he finds such joy in being loved that if, in answer to his entreaties, he arouses the least desire for his love, he is drawn irresistibly to the heart from which that response has come: 'Will none have pity on me, none sympathise and share my sorrow in the pitiful conditions in which sinners have brought me, especially at this moment?' It is the plea of almost intolerable loneliness—a plea for love from the heart of a father who has lived and suffered for his children, and to whom his children will not give so much as recognition in return. He lived and died and lives again for sinners, not for saints; and surely the worst of sinners might at least be grateful for such efforts,—might at least feel pity for such suffering! And if the sinner sees in the need for love some evidence of weakness, why care, so long as imperfect understanding can be used to bring that soul to love at last?"

The Gael groaned. "It is frightful," he said. "Properly understood, it is more tragic than any tragedy ever written. No wonder that the saints wept over it continuously,—and they, for centuries, thought of it as only of the past. . . . But let us remember that it is within the power of each of us to comfort him—that Christ of whom you have been speaking. For he told that little nun—as he has told men and women of all creeds, in every century—just how it may be done: 'Daughter, wilt thou give me thy heart, that my suffering heart may therein find repose?' Simply to love him; simply to trust him with our happiness: that is all! And to think that we so cling to our own opinion of where happiness lies, that, time after time, we take back our offering, take back our hearts,—and leave him comfortless! Well I know what will be said: 'there are plenty of others.' But, when one child goes astray, is a father satisfied because others remain? Is it not true, rather, that, in the whole world's wilderness, there is no other child but that one?"

"I am not a Christian"—it was the Old Member who spoke—"and

I do not see why anyone should feel called upon to serve one Master rather than another. Do what is right, and you will serve them all."

The Gael did not hesitate. "I am not a Christian either," he said. "I am a Catholic—at least, when I am talking with Protestants. And I have to be a Catholic, for otherwise there would be no excuse for my detestation of the Vatican and of Rome. I should be compelled to make it a family feud, even if it were not mine by birth-right. . . . Besides, you people are so grossly ignorant of what Catholicism represents, and of what it contains potentially, that, for your sakes, I would persevere. Also, I like it. . . . And as to serving one Master rather than another,—how can you, until you know them apart, or, in any case, until you find within you a feeling for one of them which you do not have for others. All comparisons are odious (I used as a boy to write that remark in my copy-book); but to compare the merits of different Masters is an impertinence. It is sillier than it would be for two small children to discuss the respective merits, say of Fra Angelico and of Fra Bartolemeo. I am not advocating especial devotion to one; and I never do, unless I find the possibility of such devotion already existing, and that that line of approach is the line of least resistance. If I were in Burma, I should unquestionably, except in rare cases, advocate a special devotion to Buddha. But your attitude" (turning to the Old Member) "impresses me as illogical. Theoretically, you insist that all Masters are working for the same end—for the enlightenment of humanity. Practically, you deny this by standing aside from the movement known as Christian, in spite of the fact that it is—at least nominally—the religion of the country in which you were born. And if I, for instance, show any special feeling for Christ, it arouses your prejudice to the point of nervous irritation. If an orthodox Churchman were to show similar prejudice against Buddha or Krishna, you would think of him as 'narrow' and would pity him. I grant you that the Protestant churches are a public scandal" (he said this, more grieved than angry,—looking into space just over the level of our heads)—"but you cannot reform people by telling them they are irreclaimable: you must hold out some ray of hope; you must look for and find what is best; you must encourage good tendencies constantly. And if that is true of individuals, why not of churches and of religions? I have seen goats sacrificed to Shîva in Hindu temples: but I do not on that account condemn the religious life of India, or refuse to recognize its saints as saints, or study the *Bhagavad Gîta* merely to find fault with its doctrine. Let us be theosophical in more than name. . . . Do I not forgive these Protestants their schism" (waving a friendly hand towards the rest of us), "and say a good word, sometimes, for their very excellent intentions? Let us be reasonable about these things, and admit the entire propriety of having special friends, even among the Masters. They are not 'desiccated pansies,' as one of them once wrote; and I shrewdly suspect that they, too,

have human preferences. Would it lower your ideal of them if one were to admit that he found the temperament, perhaps of the people of France, a trifle more congenial than that of Laplanders or of Zulus? . . . So, with your permission, while I keep my mind unprejudiced, I shall give my heart wide freedom to follow the call of one who for ages has laboured with love to draw it into his own. . . . But" (the Gael has a maddening habit of proving the other man wrong and of leaving him no chance to deny it)—"but I have again been guilty of diverting the conversation from the Sage's most sage beginning. Perhaps he will be good enough to advise us how to act in this dilemma: granting that we believe in the love of some Master for us; granting that we should like to love him in return but feel that we do not as yet love him adequately—what can we do about it?"

"Your question," laughed the Sage, "really covers the whole field of spiritual progress, and I have my limits—very decidedly as to knowledge, and with almost equal definiteness when it comes to time and energy. But there are two or three points which I can suggest. First, to explain my own statement,—a Master is one who has made our highest ideal a living reality: he has done that and has passed far beyond it. Consequently, to love him, to obey him, is to love and to obey our own ideal. And, just as we need a teacher for the proper study of any art or science, whose experience will spare us unnecessary failure and waste, and whose attainments, in the direction of our study, should serve us as standard and ideal and stimulus,—so, also, as soon as we approach the problem of our spiritual development seriously (the development of our own character and powers, if you prefer so to phrase it), we need one who has already achieved to serve as ideal and guide and inspiration. To love such attainments is, obviously, the first step: because to love is to desire. And it is easier to love them in concrete form than as abstract qualities. Therefore we should learn to love some Master.

"At this point there is a contradiction, I think, in the wording of the Gael's question; because, once we not only believe in but truly appreciate that Master's love for us, we cannot fail to love him, with heart and mind and will, in return. So, in order to take the first step which I have suggested, we should meditate upon (that is to say, think over and brood upon) the way in which he loves us, always making our application personal,—specific, not general; 'me' rather than 'us.'

"In this connection we should use our imagination freely: for imagination, properly controlled, is a divine power. 'Will and imagination are the means employed in the production of every magical phenomenon,' as Madame Blavatsky expressed it: and we are speaking now of the most magical of all phenomena—the conversion of lead into gold, of corruption into incorruption, of the mortal into the immortal, of the animal into the divine. . . . So, then, we should use our imagination

boldly in order to gain appreciation of what a Master's love for us means, and of how we should like to love him in return—using also the world's great scriptures as foundation, as these are full of instances and illustrations, left us for the very purpose of helping us in this work.

"Meditation alone, however, will not do it, any more than the cold study of books. By means of meditation we shall gain light and temporary warmth; but the light and the warmth will disappear unless we use them: unless we flap our wings as the bird does, and gain strength from exercise. What I mean is,—we must live by the light we have found, and turn meditation into action. There will be resistance (and if it were not for the resistance of the air, the bird could not fly at all). We shall have to contend against the resistance of all that is selfish in us; and we shall be tempted to make the mistake of attributing to outer circumstances the cause of the difficulties which beset us. May heaven or some kindly Djin protect us from that mistake! The only enemy that concerns us is the enemy within our gates; the enemy we see as a friend, and to whom we give power by thinking of him as "myself.'

"We must do the deed, then, if we would have the power. And this means more than obeying the ten commandments and a few more rules of ethics. Such obedience will make us good; but it will not make us occulists; it will not make us disciples, or give us knowledge of spiritual laws and forces. If we love the Master we must wish to serve him; and if we wish to serve him we must desire his power to serve. So we must use our imagination again. Failing still to love him utterly—to the point of thinking no longer of ourselves at any time, but only of him,—we must say to ourselves, 'I will act as if I did so love Him. I will learn to love by behaving as if I did. In my soul, in my inmost heart, I do already love him better than I love corruption, better than I love my lower self. I will externalize the real. I will make that Immortal live in all the details of my life. I will take love as the truth of my life. I will ask myself, fifty times a day, what I would do in that minute *if* I loved the Master with a consuming passion of love: and I will obey my vision whether I love him or not!'

"Do you catch that? It is tremendous. It is the most creative thing that a human being can do. For what is the result? You act *as if;* and, before you know it, the 'as if' *is*. And that is divine magic; that is to use will and imagination on behalf of all the longing and the effort of the universe; that is to throw yourself irrevocably into the burning heart of the Master. No longer will he need to cry to you through the darkness of your mind, 'child, give me thy heart;' for you—you and no other—will cry to him day and night, with an anguish of desire, 'Master, take my heart and give me thine: give me thy heart of flame: in the name of pity, give me thy heart—Thy heart with which to love Thee and all that is Thine; Thy heart that I may live.'"

The Sage had spoken very quietly, but it was easy to see that he

felt deeply the reality of what he said; and the Objector did not like it. The feeling was foreign to his habit. He could not understand it, and he said so. "It is beyond me—the whole business! If I didn't know you better, it would remind me of the hysteria of some of the mediæval monks. No—don't misunderstand me: I am not accusing you of the extravagance with which, nevertheless, you seem to sympathize: I am not making that mistake. What I do not understand is how so normal a person as you are can admire that kind of emotionalism."

The Gael exploded (he loves the Sage). "Most innocent Objector," he said; "truly you wrong him. If the Sage were the cold-blooded fish you take him to be, he would not be my friend: and that settles it. Incidentally, what in the name of all that is wonderful do you suppose the heart of man is made of? Or the heart of a woman? Jelly? Or some amorphous pre-amœbic plasma? Why such passion of love? Why,—because some people are alive! And because—yes, historically, mathematically, scientifically—human beings have been known to exist who loved someone or something better than they loved themselves!"

He was interrupted by the Sage, who pushed him back into his chair (for the Gael had risen for the occasion), and who told him to keep quiet.

"The Objector is all right," he said. "He represents a different point of view, and one that is entitled to at least as much respect as my own. We are Theosophists, or, more correctly, are trying to be; and, for us, fanaticism should be impossible. But there is this to be said, and he will be the first to admit the truth of it: that you have as between men and women many instances on record of a devotion so complete that the mind and feeling of one were lost in love and consideration of the other. We must suppose that the great lovers of history were conscious at all times—no matter how busy they were with other things—of the object of their devotion. Everything they did must have been begun, continued and ended because of their love, and with the fire of it smouldering always as the source of their inspiration. The dryest duty, in that case, by its perfect performance, would have served them as means to express and to prove and to glorify the love that was in them. They would, as it were, have done all things in the name of the one whom they adored. And we know that to be the fact. We know it from biography and history and poetry. Nor need we suppose that a Master necessarily must be loved less completely: the lives of the saints, both men and women, prove that. How can we escape the conclusion—understand it or not—that the passionate love I spoke of is not unattainable? . . . Is it desirable? That must depend upon what our purpose in life is. Some men will say frankly that they want their own kind of happiness and that they want to find it in their own way. But, from beginning to end, my argument has been based upon the proposition that selfishness spells misery, and that the lower personal self, though it may find enjoyment

in transitory sensation, is constitutionally incapable of happiness. If we were to judge by the experience of the personal self only, we should be compelled to identify this world with Hell (you remember the phrase of St. Benedict: 'the intolerable burden of our own will'). My own belief is that the world is meant to be our Heaven, and that we can find Heaven here and now, in the midst of life as it is, if only we will consent to pass through the Purgatory of self-surrender."

"Do you suggest, then," asked the Objector, "that we should cultivate love for a Master in order to find Heaven: that we should love in order to be happy?"

"Far from it," answered the Sage. "To love for the hope of reward is a contradiction in terms. To love is its own reward. I have heard a small child say, 'Daddy, I will love you ever so much if you will give me five cents.' But you and I know that a small child is not expected to understand love. Any conception of it such as that, belongs to infancy—to the infancy of religions as much as to the infancy of human beings.

"But I have not touched what is really at the root of your objection, which I imagine to be practical rather than theoretical—theoretically there can be no objection. Granting even the faithful and regular practice of all that I have suggested, you fail to see *how* such love can develop. Well,—the full tide of it cannot. You are right in that. But let me tell you a discovery that awaits you, if ever you try that method. You will have had some idea of the Master as a task-master,—very kind and very self-sacrificing, doubtless; but still, he will have seemed to you to have been trying to save you from sin and from selfishness, at the cost of much pain to yourself, and chiefly in order that you may become one of the workers for humanity—one of those strange beings like himself, whom you have imagined to be removed from all human needs and feelings. You will have felt that your sense of duty has pushed you as far as you have gone (as probably it has), and that, though you look for no reward, your consent to the process has shown considerable generosity on your part. Then you try the method which I have ventured to recommend. You try to imagine what a Master, in his character and nature, actually is like. You begin, perhaps, by asking yourself what light you can obtain on the subject by considering what you are like in your best moments—not as an abstraction, but as a man. If I am not mistaken, you will find that you get the keenest pleasure, in those moments, from any successful effort to make those whom you love happy. You want them to be happy. You cannot imagine yourself as happy except on condition that they are happy too. And you are not selfish about it. If you love poetry and they do not, you do not try to make them happy by reading yards of poems to them—not even the poems of other people. You put yourself in their place and ask yourself what will give pleasure and, if possible, lasting pleasure to them.

"Then it will dawn upon you that the nature of a Master cannot differ radically from the best that you find in yourself. His insight will be deeper—his view of consequences and reactions far more comprehensive; but his desire must surely be similar to your own.

"Apply this to your past attitude and relations. Have you not done the Master a grave injustice? Have you not failed lamentably in gratitude? You have thought of yourself, not as 'badly used' (I exonerate you from that), but as enduring bravely the blows of outrageous fortune; as suffering stoically for your past sins; as trying to accept, without complaint, the sort of discipline and discomfort which, you suppose, is the penalty to be paid for occult training. Suddenly you realize that, throughout it all, the Master has taken upon himself the burden of your sins; that he has held back from you, by main force, and at infinite personal cost, the blows of fate which otherwise would have crushed you; that he has been toiling incessantly, tirelessly, with no thought of himself, or of his own happiness, inspired by no other desire than that you, whom he so dearly loves, may attain quickly to the happiness which he sees within his reach to give you.

"Surely the least you can feel is a flood of gratitude! And you have made a discovery. You are beginning to understand him—to understand his love for you. You will begin truly to love him in return; and you will begin to feel, as a friend of mine said of a Master not many days ago—'It does hurt him so to see us suffer.'

"Will our path be rose-strewn now for ever? It will not. For, even if we cease to suffer for ourselves, we could not cease to suffer for the suffering of others. But life will be made wonderful by love, and love of him will give us the right to relieve him of some of the burden of this world's pain. That will be our first reward: to carry our cross so cheerfully, day by day, that we relieve him of its weight, —carrying it as that part of his burden which he asks us, for his sake, to carry; and so to gain strength to share with him, purely for love of him, and to our infinite delight, not only his work for others, but that dominion over the world which endless love of the world at last will give him."

T.

A PRIMER OF THEOSOPHY

I.

IN studying any system of religious thought worthy of the name, we are at once confronted by the problems involved in the relations of the Creator to the created, of Man to God. But we soon find that it is man who is really the creator, and that it is in his image that his God is made. The god of the savage is an intensification of the traits that the savage most fears, and admires and naturally worships, and as civilization carries its broadening light into darkest Africa, for instance, the deified savage takes on the semblance of something higher than himself in the scale of being, or if not higher, at least more powerful. In Browning's wonderful poem of "Caliban upon Setebos," the poet seems to have penetrated to the very core of primitive man's nature, and to have painted a perfect picture of what he calls "natural theology in the island," as embodied in the savage Caliban's description of his creator, "placable if His mind and ways were guessed, but rougher than His handiwork, be sure. . . . "Also it pleaseth Setebos to work, use all His hands and exercise much craft, by no means for the love of what is worked. . . . Believeth with the life the pain shall stop. His dam held different; that after Death, He both plagued enemies and feasted friends. Meanwhile, the best way to escape His ire, is not to seem too happy."

And yet even through this dim and bewildered brain, creeps a faint notion of "something higher than Setebos, that made *Him,* . . . something quiet o'er His head, out of his reach, that feels nor joy nor grief. . . . This quiet, all it hath a mind to, doth."

So comes into imperfect understanding, a suggestion of something greater than Setebos. If Setebos made man, then who made Setebos? And so, step by step with the development of man, grows the development of the idea of a Divine Being, embodied in the majestic figures of the sculptured gods of India, of Egypt, of Greece and Rome, as the objects of men's adoration. Later on, the jealous God of Israel sweeps away the worship of beauty, and then with the Christian era, begins the worship of a God of Love.

But all these phases of the Divinity mostly concerned the people, for among the priests and philosophers of every age is handed down a "Wisdom-Religion," the portion of "those who know," the keys that open the doors of all knowledge, behind which lie hidden the answers to all the enigmas of the universe.

And the first and most important of these answers is the teaching that God is Spirit, not *a* Spirit, but SPIRIT, One and Indivisible, that from Him all things proceed, and to Him all things must return. But while

we look upon Him as the source of all Being, we have a dim feeling that beyond the heavens that declare the glory of God, there is what Browning's Caliban would call "the Quiet," an all-embracing something, a spiritual atmosphere, so to speak, but utterly beyond the power of primeval man to comprehend. It is impossible to formulate the basic ideas of theosophy without a metaphysical background, it only remains to make that background as simple and easily comprehensible as possible.

If we attempt to pierce through the veils that represent to us the limits of thought, we find ourselves confronted with that vague something which our philosophers, in default of a better word, have called the ABSOLUTE, or the UNKNOWABLE. "The Absolute is not to be defined," (says the *Secret Doctrine,* Abridg. p. 322) "and no mortal nor immortal has ever seen or comprehended it during the periods of existence. The mutable cannot know the immutable, nor can that which lives perceive *Absolute Life.*"

The first and fundamental axiom of theosophy then, is this metaphysical conception of the Absolute, "the Causeless Cause," from which is derived "the *First* Cause." Because when we speak of the *first,* we think of something that is dependent on time, and space, and rank, and none of these can have any relation to the Absolute, which is entirely outside of our conditioned existence. As an old Kabalistic poem says: "Thou art One, the root of all numbers, but not as an element of numeration, for Unity admits not of multiplication, change or form. Thou art One, and no thought of ours can fix for Thee a limit, or define Thee"

From "the Causeless Cause," the "Unknowable," is derived "the First Cause," the Creative God of all theologies. This is the Logos, in the theosophic philosophy the synthesis of the Seven Creative Powers, the "Word" of St. John's Gospel. "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was Life; and the Life was the Light of men."

And at the beginning of a new cycle of existence, when this Light springs forth from the bosom of Darkness, "the pairs of opposites" come into existence, and the work of creation, or rather evolution, begins. Spirit-Matter divides into Spirit *and* Matter, two aspects of the One Unity, and from them radiates the Divine Energy, *force* as science calls it, which corresponds to "the Son" of the Christian Trinity. Spirit, Matter, Force, these are the three in one that form the basis of every theological trinity.

That which theosophy calls *Universal Substance,* is underlying matter in all its different grades, and that which it calls *Universal Thought* is the root of all individual consciousness. But apart from Universal Substance, Universal Thought could not manifest as *individual* consciousness, because it is only through a vehicle of matter that consciousness

wells up as "I am I." And apart from Universal Thought, Universal Substance would remain an empty abstraction..

But just as the opposite poles of Spirit and Matter are but twin aspects of the one Unity, so there exists in the manifested Universe the guiding power of all manifestation, the Thought Divine, transmitted and made manifest through the intelligent Forces which are the architects of the visible world. Thus from Spirit, or Universal Thought, comes our consciousness; from Universal Substance the several vehicles in which that consciousness is individualized and attains to *self*-consciousness; while the Divine Energy, in its various manifestations, is the mysterious link between Mind and Matter, the animating principle electrifying every atom into life. Universal Thought includes Law, and the Forces of Nature are comprised in Universal Energy, while *Life* and *Motion* are convertible terms.

We must begin, then, by recognizing the existence of an Immutable Principle, which is entirely beyond the range of human thought, and therefore is best spoken of (if spoken of at all) as the *Unknowable.* This is symbolised by theosophy under two aspects, absolute, abstract Space, and absolute, abstract Motion. This abstract Motion is the *One Life,* eternal, invisible, but omnnipresent, without beginning or end, yet periodical in its regular manifestations. It is often spoken of as "the Great Breath." Upon the boundless plane of the universe the worlds appear and disappear, in a regular tidal ebb of flux and reflux, confirming the absolute universality of that law of periodicity, or cyclic law, which obtains in every department of nature.

Moreover, we are taught, *first,* the fundamental identity of all souls with the universal Over-soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and *second,* the obligatory pilgrimage of every soul through "the Cycle of Necessity" or reincarnation, in accordance with the all-powerful law of cause and effect, and that of periodicity spoken of above. The Monad or unit of consciousness making this journey, is called "the Pilgrim," and is the only immortal and eternal principle in us, being an indivisible part of the Universal Spirit, a Ray of the Divine. This obligatory pilgrimage springs from the law that no purely Divine Soul can have an independent, conscious existence until it has passed through all the lower grades of being, belonging to this cycle of life, and thus has acquired the individuality which makes it immortal, first through natural impulse, and then by self-devised efforts, modified by the experiences it has gathered on the way. Thus it ascends through all grades of intelligence, from that of the mineral to that of the holiest archangel, and works out its own salvation by its own efforts, for the pivotal doctrine of the esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in any man except those won by his own Ego through personal effort during a long series of re-incarnations.

This teaching of "the Cycle of Necessity" is very important because

so many have asked, why should "the Pilgrim" leave its celestial abode and go through so much misery and such long and painful struggles, only to get back to where it started? But it gets back with the conscious, immortal entity it has made of itself, and this is the salvation it has won. It has built up its individuality and is now an immortal Soul, not merely part of a wave of life, one indistinguishable drop of the ocean of being.

"Just as at the close of the siderial year the heavenly bodies return to the same relative positions which they occupied at its beginning, so at the close of the Cycle of initiation, the inner man has regained the pristine state of divine purity and Knowledge from which he set out on his cycle of terrestrial incarnations."—(Abridgment 184.)

"It is the spiritual evolution of the *inner* immortal man, that forms the fundamental tenet of theosophy, the re-incarnating *Ego* that existed before its physical body, and survives all bodies that it may be clothed in." (Abridgment 285. 476.)

II

Evolution

The law of Evolution as defined by the scientist, means first of all, "a law of continuity or causal relation throughout nature," or in other words, "a continuous progressive change according to certain laws and by means of resident forces." (Le Conte on *Evolution.*) These "resident" forces of Le Conte, are the same thing that theosophy calls "the essential faculty possessed by all the cosmic and terrestrial elements of *generating within themselves* a regular and harmonious series of results, a concatenation of causes and effects, which proves that they are animated by intelligence coming either from within or from without." In fact, to become complete and comprehensible, a theory of the universe has to start with a primordial Substance diffused throughout boundless Space, of *an intellectual and divine nature.* That substance must be the Spirit and Soul, the synthesis and highest principle, of the manifested Kosmos. And to serve as a physical basis to this, there must be its vehicle—*primordial physical matter,* so to speak, though its nature must forever escape our limited normal senses, and we can know it only through its phenomena, the results, that is, of the action of the laws or forces of Nature, the life of the physical world. These forces may be roughly summed up as Light, Heat, Sound, Cohesion or Attraction, (which of course includes Repulsion) and Magnetism, or Nerve-Force, together synthesized as *Motion.* These are not the "blind forces" of science, but the manifestations of intelligent Powers, the Builders of the Universe.. And while science recognizes innumerable degrees in the scale of physical being, theosophy maintains that there are at least as many in the scale of spiritual existence.

But while the degrees are infinite, none the less does this philosophy

assert as its fundamental law, *"the radical unity* of all the component parts in Nature, from star to mineral atom, from the highest spiritual being to the smallest infusoria, throughout *all* the worlds, whether spiritual, intellectual or physical."

"The informing Intelligences, then, which animate the various centres of being, * * * are called by the truly ignorant, gods; by the learned-profane *the One* God; and the wise, the Initiates, honor in them only the periodic manifestations of *That* which neither our Creators nor their creators can ever discuss or know anything about."

The dawn of manifestation begins with *attraction,* the first flutter of awakening life being towards the centre, and after attraction comes expansion, or the action of the repulsive force, the two forming the rhythm of the Universe, or "the Great Breath." A fundamental law of theosophy as well of science, is that known as "the conservation of energy," which maintains that there is no such thing as rest or cessation of motion during these periods of activity, that which seems rest being only the change of one form into another. And another fundamental law is, that there is no such thing in Nature as *in*organic (or lifeless) substances or bodies. Minerals and even chemical atoms are simply organic units in profound lethargy, which has an end, and their coma becomes activity, when the wave of the new cycle of Life sweeps over them.

There is no room here for the details of the splendid system of evolution as described in the *Secret Doctrine,* but it should be explained that in the earlier thesophical books, such as *Esoteric Buddhism,* an error has crept in as to the teaching of the "planetary chains," Mr. Sinnett having therein described the Earth as one of a chain of seven planets, including the chief planets of our solar system. But the *Secret Doctrine* teaches that the Earth has its own seven states of matter and consciousness like all the other planets. These seven "globes" as they are sometimes called, are of varying materiality, descending through three grades of increasing density to the fourth or most material, (represented by our Earth in its present state) and ascending through three grades leading back to the spiritual. And as our physical eyes are only capable of perceiving objects on the physical plane, it follows that any stars or planets visible to us are on the same plane as ourselves, and neither higher nor lower in the scale of being. And these seven "globes" or conditions of matter, are capable of simultaneous existence, as the more ethereal interpenetrate the more substantial. Theosophy teaches that the matter of the heavenly spheres has its seven forms. First, we have *primordial* homogeneous matter, the One Element; then the second stage, called by science Cosmic dust, and Fire-mist; the third stage is the nebulous; the fourth is the atomic, when Divine Force thrills through this primordial matter, and the eternal vibration in the unmanifested world becomes vortical motion in the manifested. With motion, the differentiation of the elements begins,

and we have the fiery, or *germinal* stage, so-called, because these "elements" are but the germs of those we know. The sixth stage, the vaporous, the four-fold, shows us the beginning of our elements, the future earth, and the seventh stage is the cold and solidifying globe, dependent upon the sun for life and light.

Very briefly and roughly sketched, this is the *field* of man's evolution. The *reason* of it is to be found in that often-quoted saying of Patanjali: "The universe exists for the sake of the soul's experience and emancipation," in other words, to give the soul its opportunity for development and salvation. And as man, to accept the popular division, is composed of body, soul, and spirit, the *process* of this evolution must necessarily be three-fold—physical, mental and spiritual.

The Ray of the Universal Mind, then, (the Monad, or the Pilgrim) passes through seven planes, three below and three above what the scientists call our threshold of consciousness. First it passes through three elemental planes or nascent centres of force, which answer to the nebulous stages in the earth's history; then through the mineral kingdom, the turning point in the evolution of consciousness, where it becomes wholly latent, then through the three stages of "organic" life, the vegetable, the animal, the human. In the higher animals the Monad almost becomes an individual entity, while in the vegetable kingdom there is hardly any tendency towards individual consciousness, which can only be seen in such attempts as the persistent struggle of a vine towards a support upon one side of it, or the unwearied seeking of a poplar's roots after the water of a distant well.

The Sun gives Life to man, and therefore in the Eastern symbolism is rightly called his father, while the Moon represents his mother, for it is to the "lunar ancestors" that he owes that astral form around which is built up the physical body, given by his nurse the Earth. This astral prototype is formed of molecular matter far too ethereal to be perceptible to our normal senses, and interpenetrates the matter of our physical bodies, as a subtle odor interpenetrates the air.

And as the seed that perishes in the ground nourishes, by its decay, a new plant, so the Moon, having completed her cycle of existence, transferred her energies in dying (according to the law of the conservation of force) to a new cosmic centre which became our Earth. The process of evolution upon the Earth, as well as all other worlds, is by seven successive waves of life-giving energy, which it has been agreed to call *Rounds,* and during each of these stages of evolution, seven *Races,* with many subdivisions, inhabit the earth, each Race being specially adapted to the conditions which surround it.

But the human Monad which has begun its pilgrimage upon this globe does not merely touch upon each of these conditions and then pass on, but has to go through many incarnations in each Race, the development of the individual soul being a long process. Between each individ-

ual incarnation, and between each Round, or wave of evolution, the human Ego passes through a period of subjective, or unconscious life, thus completing the analogy with the shorter cycles of day and night, life and death, etc. Four times that great wave of evolutionary force has swept over the Earth, and four great Races have passed away. The present humanity is the fifth division of the Fifth Race, so that we have passed the lowest point of materiality, and are beginning to ascend towards spirit. But the eighteen millions of years which embrace the duration of perfected *physical* man, have to be enormously increased if the whole process of spiritual, astral, and physical development, is taken into account. All analogy goes to show the truth of the theosophical teachings that man was not "created" the complete being he is now, however imperfect he still remains. Worlds and men were in turns formed and destroyed, *under the law of evolution and from pre-existing material,* until both the planets and their men became what they are in the present cycle.

In strict analogy, the cycle of seven Rounds that gradually leads man's physical body through every kingdom of nature up to its perfect form, is repeated on a much smaller scale in the first seven months' life of the human embryo.. As the embryo although fully formed at that period, yet needs two months more in which to acquire a perfect development, so "man, having perfected his evolution during seven Rounds, remains two periods more in the womb of mother Nature before he is born (or reborn) a Dhyani, (or Divine Intelligence) still more perfect than he was before he launched forth as a Monad on the newly built chain of worlds" (*Secret Doctrine,* II. 259).

K. Hillard.

(*To be continued.*)

THE PILGRIM

THE long, weary journey was nearly over, how long, how weary, the Pilgrim himself scarcely realized, for he felt that only one more steep ascent lay before him, but one sharp corner must be turned and he would stand at the door of the Temple.

Months, nay, it was years ago, he had received the message, bidding him leave his old home, the land of his birth, and journey with all speed to the distant Temple, where, if he wished it, he would be admitted as a Neophyte.

What joy and gratitude had been his when he received this order; with what glad haste he had gathered together his most precious possessions, made due preparation, and staff in hand, had turned his face towards that strange land which until then had been only a name to him!

At first all had gone well. The road wound through beautiful, fertile plains and exquisite forests, filled with fragrant flowers and the song of birds. Moreover, he had not been alone, quite a large company of pilgrims, all bound for the Temple, had journeyed by the same road and in conversation with them the hours had passed swiftly. All too soon, however, the foot of the mountains had been reached, the first difficulty had arisen, for there the single road became two, one skirting the foothills and then leading across open plains to a great city that could be dimly seen on the horizon, the other winding up into the mountains. A heated discussion had ensued amongst the pilgrims, some declaring it absurd to follow a path leading into mountainous regions where no Temple could be built, when they were sure to find it in the city; the others affirming with equal certainty that the Temple lay far from plains and cities and could only be reached by crossing the hills.

Being unable to agree the little band had separated, more than half had turned their steps city-ward, the others taking the mountain road. Then the difficulties of the way had become apparent—the Pilgrim shivered as he remembered them. The weary path winding ever upwards, growing steeper day by day, the burning noonday sun, the freezing nights, the dense mists, enveloping them for many days.

He had pressed on and on, assisting his weaker comrades, nursing them when sick, searching far and wide for food for them, guiding them carefully over the worst places and binding up their torn and bleeding feet. The little company had dwindled sadly, for some had turned back as soon as the path became really rough, while of those who had persevered many had fallen and died by the roadside. Now only two or three remained with him, worn, spent and aged, but how dear to him were these comrades, these loyal friends with whom he had endured so much.

One thing only troubled him. The treasures he had carried away

from his distant home, which he intended as gifts to the Temple, had proved too heavy to carry far. Sadly and reluctantly he had been obliged to drop them, one by one, by the roadside. All that remained were a few jewels hidden in his breast; his hand sought them continually, but he grieved to think his offering must be so small. With a mighty effort the Pilgrim crawled up the last ascent, turned the last angle and, with beating heart, paused for an instant thinking his goal must now be in sight. He raised his eyes and a cry of disappointment escaped him, for here was no Temple—only a wind-swept, narrow plateau, a sheer wall of rock at the end making all further progress impossible and, at the foot of the rock, a tiny iron door, heavily barred, in front of which stood a grim, motionless figure gazing across at him with stern, cold eyes. Faltering, the Pilgrim advanced and asked of him the way to the Temple.

"It lies there," was the answer, "through that door of which I am the guardian, there is no other way." "May I enter," begged the Pilgrim. "I received an order to come to the Temple and have travelled with all possible speed, but the way is long and weary, and I have been much delayed." "You may enter," replied the guardian, "but only if you leave your burden at the door," and he pointed to the hand hidden in the Pilgrim's breast. The latter drew forth the jewels and held them out: "I have no burden," he said, "all my treasures had to be abandoned long ago. These poor jewels I kept only for an offering to the Temple. I cannot enter without a gift in my hand."

But the grim figure only pointed sternly at the jewels and with a heavy heart the Pilgrim laid them at his feet. At that the guardian drew the heavy bolts, the door swung ajar and the Pilgrim advanced to enter, when suddenly remembering his companions he stood aside and bade them pass in first, but the guardian swiftly barred the way. "Nay!" he exclaimed, "that cannot be, through that door none enters but alone. Your comrades must remain outside!" A cry of indignation escaped the Pilgrim. How could he abandon those loved and faithful friends?

A fierce battle raged in the Pilgrim's heart. His whole being revolted at the idea of deserting his friends. Surely it would be better to remain outside, to perish with them, if need be; yet a voice within him told him that he had been ordered to go to the Temple and that the order must be obeyed, no matter at what cost. In agonized tones he told them he must go, begging them to forgive him, saying that once in the Temple he would surely find some kindly priest or attendant who would guide him back to the door and let them all in. But they clung piteously to him, till at last he had to tear himself from their grasp and, brushing past the silent, motionless guardian, entered the door, which immediately clanged heavily behind him.

Half fainting, he sank to the ground and, on recovering consciousness, found himself in thick darkness, no ray of light anywhere, and groping around discovered that he was in a narrow passage in which

it was impossible to stand upright. On hands and knees he dragged himself along, weary, breathless, aching in every limb, his heart full of misery and longing at the thought of those he had left outside. Each minute seemed an eternity, his strength was failing fast; he felt the end near at hand, when, looking up in agony, he perceived a dim ray of light and with a supreme effort dragged himself towards it. Brighter and brighter grew the glimmer till it broke on his dazed eyes in a great flood of glory and scarce conscious of how he had come there, he found himself in a vast hall, full of radiance and warmth. Tall, shining figures advanced to meet him, greeting him with kindly eyes, welcoming him as the new Neophyte. As in a dream he found them gently stripping off his foul rags, clothing him in spotless white garments, pouring rare perfumes over him, crowning him with fragrant flowers and finally leading him across the hall and through a great, glittering portal.

Here a far greater radiance smote him, a great awe filled him, for he stood at last in the Temple, whose glory was beyond all he had ever dreamed of.

Not daring to raise his eyes, he sank on his knees behind a pillar and strove to pray, but could not, for his thoughts turned ever to his loved companions and the longing for them grew more acute every moment. He could feel nothing but that and a hot revolt at the thought of them perishing miserably in the cruel mountains. Suddenly a rush of melody fell on his ear, low at first, then growing stronger, till the whole structure of the Temple vibrated to it and then his aching heart overflowed and bowing his head on his hands, at last he prayed. His whole soul rose in prayer to the One Spirit, praying for those he had left, beseeching that they might enter and be blessed as he was.

Nor for them alone did he pray, but for all the others, those that had fallen by the roadside and those who, fainthearted, had turned back. All, all, must come in. His heart dilated and filled with immortal love. As from a height he seemed to gaze down on the suffering, toiling world of men; and he knew he could have no happiness, no peace, while one of them remained outside. His soul soared upwards in supplication for all his brethren, losing all thought of self in love for them, begging only that he might be permitted to return to suffer with and work for them, till all had found the way.

Slowly the great harmonies died away. Silence fell on the air, but still the Neophyte remained bowed in prayer, when a gentle hand was laid upon his shoulder. Looking up with awe, he beheld the guardian, no longer stern and forbidding, but smiling, tender, and majestic.

"Lo, friend, there is your answer," the Radiant Figure spoke. At His voice and gesture the Neophyte turned and there beheld them—all his companions of the mountain, all, even to the least and poorest of them, with love filled eyes and welcoming hands, outstretched to him.

E. M. S.

WHY I JOINED THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

TOO bad that so many interesting things occur before we have any interest in them! There is the complicated process of learning to talk—each one of us was obliged to devote much persevering effort and time to that task. Why did we take the trouble, when we knew nothing about the avenues to human intercourse that would be opened up by this painful mastery of words as symbols? At that time we certainly had nothing to say that went beyond the limits of universal sign-language.

If only a lusty two-year-old could give us his version of the impulses that pushed him on to speech! To be sure his story would have only an occasional connection with the actual facts of the case as known to his elders; but what interest there would be in tracing the means by which the smaller and personal desires of the child were molded and controlled by the larger and more universal purposes acting on and through him. Some day let us hope that his story will be written!

Meantime here is an equally partial and inaccurate account of another adventure, undertaken like the child's with little conception of the reaches that were to be opened by it. As I attempt to tell why I joined the Theosophical Society, it is with the saving sense that none of us will take these "reasons" as the real ones. They have to do with the surface currents that were useful as mind-hushers, while the real things, of which the mind was not conscious, took place elsewhere.

It was several years ago that I *first* joined The Theosophical Society, but I have been joining ever since, and as yet I am only a partial member. Every few months I find a new phase of the Society to join, or a new part of me that never joined. Indeed, I have split myself into so many different members that it would be disastrous if the Treasurer were to assess me annually for each one.

Perhaps my progressive attempts to unite myself with the Society were made necessary by the debonair manner in which I made my application for membership; that was made with little notion of the Society's high calling and wonderful mission. I had some superficial information about the tenets and aims of the Theosophist, as popularly understood; had read with heedless eye and heart the best known of the Theosophical manuals; and had found in them little to provoke more than a passing interest. The whole scheme seemed to me to be based on an analysis of man's needs and possibilities that was clear but profitless. So I had classified Theosophy as an admirably constructed highroad that led nowhere.

Consequently it was with a special tug at my social patience that I accepted an invitation to a drawingroom talk by a Theosophist. Much to my surprise it was a remarkable talk, touching on the problems of life with a directness and insight that challenged attention. I was so deeply impressed with the speaker's vision and force that it seemed worth while to undertake the task of separating the real wheat from what I considered the Theosophical chaff. So I asked where I could hear more. If the speaker had replied, "Come to our Theosophical meeting next week," I fear years might have passed before I was ready to try that pasturage. Fortunately he told me that some friends were to meet soon for the discussion of similar topics and I would be welcome as a guest. I went and found there people of unusual power and with that peculiar lucidity of speech and vision that characterized the speaker of the previous evening. There was also something about the atmosphere of the gathering that was profoundly impressive, and to a strange degree both compelling and deterring. An invitation to attend subsequent meetings was eagerly sought.

Several months later I faced the disconcerting discovery that I had actually been attending, with keen satisfaction, the regular meetings of a Branch of the Theosophical Society—at the worst I had imagined them to be gatherings of friends interested in metaphysical discussions, among whom were numbered some with a bent toward Theosophical half-truths. Even this surprising discovery did not alter my conviction that Theosophy was a road, full of "blinds" and pitfalls, that circled around but did not ascend the Delectable Mountains. Yet I began to feel that I must either become a member of the Society or cease to attend its meetings, since there was no reason why I should seek to enroll myself as perpetual guest. With the declared objects of the Society I had no quarrel, though I was certain that those objects could never be realized by its methods. However, I wanted to secure the right to attend the meetings, so I made application for membership. I meant to be one of those "by night" members, for I did not intend to let any of my friends know that I was a member of the Society—and really all I had done was to arrange for a pew in that house of worship, from which I could watch proceedings.

Even though I was joining the Society in such a tenuous way I did cherish the hope of being useful to it. For I was persuaded that it was wasting time in mining little pockets of ore, while somewhere there was the "mother lode" that would infinitely repay the effort necessary to locate and work it. While I had never seen it I thought I knew how it might be found by those who, like these rare Theosophists, were qualified for the search. It was not that I felt a call to instruct them, that would be absurd, but I did fully expect that the "real light" of which I had caught distant reflections in other lines of study, would suddenly break through for them. When it came I had no question that they would recognise and follow it. Gradually, I came to see that these Theosophists

had more standing-room in the divine world than any people I had ever known. Then, in my mind, I joined the Society over again. To be sure I still thought that there was some more direct and authentic path to the great goal, but I was sure that I had a better chance of finding it if I went along with the Theosophists than if I trudged alone. I wanted to be at hand, ready for the start, when these good people found the true path.

Up to this time life had been a drab affair, even from the start. As a child I had lived alone in a world of my own construction—and had proved a very poor creator. The little interior world of which I had made my small personality the center was most unsatisfactory, even then. I was dogged with a constant sense of incompleteness, almost too heavy to be borne. It was nearly burdensome enough to drive me from my self-centered position. Only I could not find either in the youngsters or in the grown-ups about me any real companionship—probably because I presented a chestnut-burr exterior. At least I discovered no way of breaking into their world, or of bringing others into mine. Unable to fellowship with folks, I early concluded that my only chance was to fellowship with God. On that subject my ideas were distorted little copies of the notions prevalent in the dogma-ridden community in which I was brought up. To assent to certain interpretations of the God-man and his mission, to give up certain so-called worldly amusements—that was the sum of everybody's obligation. When one had met this obligation the burden of all the rest was on the shoulders of the Almighty. I knew these formulas by heart, but somehow the experiment did not work for me, the miracle I was expecting would not happen: I was still in my cramped little, mean little universe, as much shut off from God as from the human beings around me. And while I grieved, it never occurred to me that it might be my duty to seek out and do the will of God. My desire was centered in *feeling,* religious feeling to be sure, but I wanted a real orgy of it. Fortunately I was baffled at every turn and kindly thrown back on myself, instead of being allowed to set my feet in the miry soil of the psychic plane.

Naturally, I entered early on the well-known pilgrimage of doubt. Had I not already tested the Christian formula and found that it would not work! The nature and scope of the doubt grew with my growth; and the bitterness and intensity of the interior struggle kept pace. It furnished a natural center for the youthful melancholy with which the entire universe is tinged at certain stages, even for the less reflective of its children. Mine was a "good old-fashioned case" of melancholics: the gloomiest of the poets was a pettifogging trifler; Carlyle's reverberating thunders always held a suggestion of coming illumination, even if of the jagged lightning brand. With what joy I discovered the old philosophers and their thoroughly inscrutable solutions of the problems of the universe. What a delightful feeling of tender comprehension, tinged

with calm superiority, I had for Descartes because at the end of his "noble doubts" he found satisfaction from all his questionings in the quagmire described by his famous "I think, therefore I am." Unlike Descartes I was by no means prepared to posit my existence as a thinker. I saw myself as a miserable discord and felt no assurance that there was harmony anywhere in the universe.

Outwardly, I went through the usual motions of an ordinary, humdrum existence, yet I was haunted by the feeling that there might still be something real in life that I had failed to find. I could see no traces of it. The people around me, the most active church members, told of experiences and assurances in which I had no share; but when the great tests came, when they needed some fresh courage, some new power in an emergency, they seemed to have no access to any hidden source of supply. Like myself, they looked white-faced and stricken before experiences that ought to have carried them in confidence to their fountain head of love and of strength.

One day I strayed into a new church and had a new experience. The rector read the service with a sincerity and a depth of feeling that were a revelation to me; he preached a sermon that was in my language. I felt that he had fared through the valley of doubt, and was actually in sight of some land of promise. Sunday after Sunday, I listened eagerly to this man. I hardly dared let myself hope that I had found someone who knew that there was a King because he had seen His glory. Finally I was convinced that this man thought he saw, believed that he knew the King. Then I launched myself on a great experiment: I said I will try this thing thoroughly. For twelve months I will live in the faith of this new guide. I do not believe for a moment that there is anything in it, but having reasoned about all these things to no purpose, I will simply accept them this time; I will *pretend* that they are true and live in the light of them. So the rector acquired, all unknown to him, a faithful understudy. His words of faith I took to heart, and said to myself, over and over again, this is what we believe, the rector and I, this is what we are going to live out during the coming week. Every day as I went past his church I would rehearse the list of our beliefs, the rector's and mine. In the midst of that experiment circumstances kept me away from the newly found church—and the new faith slipped away.

By and by a new mirage appeared. I am thankful for it, too, as it served to hearten me on my way, and gave me some further needed preparation. My mirage was one of the many New Thought systems, in which there is a curious blend of mysticism and materialism. Force, I was told, fills the universe, learn to draw on it and there is no limit to the possibilities of accomplishment. Had I not been looking, all my life, for the hidden source of all life and love—now I was actually to be

taught a simple, direct way of reaching it, could even bring it down and use it as I wished. This would be real emancipation!

There was fattening food for my familiar unbelief, in the attitude of this new cult toward the forms of Christianity that I had found so unprofitable. They felt a profound pity for those who were still setting in Christian darkness while the dynamics of real life, as taught and practiced by the great Leader of the Church, were forgotten, unknown. Why must people waste precious time in religious observances instead of listening to the new evangel of unlimited force and how to use it? Why not be creators instead of creatures? So it was with a glad and final farewell to Christianity that I turned my face toward the new light shining in that darkness. For several years I lived in a welter of newly acquired "facts" about the universe, from its beginning to its end. There was keen fun in assorting and labelling them. They made most attractive furnishings for my new mansion and I enjoyed living in it. No "facts" could be permanently satisfying, however, and I began to be conscious of one serious lack in the mansion—it had no shrine: I craved an altar and a living flame burning there.

It was after this need was clearly established that I stumbled into The Theosophical Society, by the route already described. When I came to recognize the burning on its shrine, I tried to import that shrine into my mansion furnished with facts; later I sought a place before that shrine, ready to wait until I could catch a spark for my candle from the central fire burning there. The slow stages by which I eventually came to this position seem even more needlessly absurd now, after this retrospect of the many chances life has given me, than they seemed at the beginning of this story. There were evidently so many points along the way where I stood near enough to the heart of things to reach it, had I persevered. But my perseverance seemed to be limited to the continued search for new roads to the goal; it did not serve to carry me over the final difficulties of any one. Yet I was always waiting for the real thing to happen; intent on it, without faith, without hope, still I waited.

In that attitude of strained attention there was nothing to share. With an empty larder the habit of hospitality and its niceties are difficult to maintain. This is no story of a soul living in No-Man's-Land, and still there has been little in it reflecting the familiar experiences of everyday life. Where are the folks, the teachers, the learners, the loved ones? Certainly, they have had a far-reaching influence on this inner life, but the connections are too subtle for me. There always seems to be a veil between the outer world of folks and the inner world of life, as impenetrable as that curtain between the seen and the unseen. And yet I know that both are only made of dream stuff, and that both must be worn away.

To me there is nothing more impressive in the wonderful history of

the Society than the attitude, spirit and work of its present leaders; nothing so indicative of the tremendous unseen forces behind the movement as the living bond that holds those leaders together. This bond, evidently formed by a common consciousness of responsibility and privilege, enables them to work, not only as individual centers of force, but as one united current of power, guided by an insight both profound and loving.

This was to me a new type of leadership. I also found in the Society a new type of citizenship. In some of its members I discovered people of marked intellectual gifts, in others people whom circumstances had not permitted to cultivate the graces of the mind; but I found that all had graces of the heart; all had turned their lives toward the center of life and light.

In my progressive joining of the Society I have been increasingly impressed with the light that Theosophy throws on the inner meaning of the religion that Jesus came to reveal anew. At one time I fancied that I had said good-bye to it forever, now I see that through Theosophy I am just beginning to understand the meaning of his words, the aim of his sacrificial life, the measure of his uncompleted work, and his constant effort to strengthen and to steady our hold on the things of the spirit.

So here is the return and the affirmative side of the old negations. In Christianity, as I first knew it, I could find no saving grace, no healing power. After many wanderings, in despairing search for some path to the kingdom of the heavens, I come upon one, Theosophy, accredited by many signs as leading to the land of realities where the real work of the world is done by the real workers. And now this path, sought for years, proves, after all, to be no new and foreign way to the great goal, but the very same narrow way into which Jesus strove to lead his disciples, when he walked among them in Galilee.

Why, then, is that path so hard to find—if he is still with us, still the eager and loving guide? Partly, I think, because the search is too often half-hearted, inconstant; partly because dogma and doubt, like brambles and vines, have been allowed to grow over the entrance to that path. Or we might say, more accurately, that Jesus made a new way; a more direct road, for his followers to that "little old path" on which, through countless ages, men have struggled up to life eternal. He made himself the guardian of that new way, holding it open himself, at incalculable cost. Only its entrance was left to the care of his followers; yet how soon that entrance was neglected and overgrown; until now those whose insight and aspiration are not keen enough to pierce these barriers must find some other entrance, through the message and life of some other great Teacher.

ELEMENTARY ARTICLE

Theosophical Symbolism

A GREAT many of our modern Western people suppose that all that is necessary in order to give us a clear understanding of anything is that it should be distinctly stated in words. Consequently they get quite impatient when reading ancient books or the writings of Orientals. A little study of things outside of ordinary business life will convince us that the ancients were right and we are wrong, for the deepest things cannot be expressed in words, they can only be suggested by figures.

Thomas Carlyle in his *Sartor Resartus* says, "Man everywhere finds himself encompassed with Symbols, recognised as such or not recognised; the Universe is one vast Symbol of God; nay if thou wilt have it, what is man himself but a Symbol? Is not all that he does symbolical, a revelation to sense of the mystic God-given force within him, a Gospel of Freedom which he, the Messenger of Nature, preaches as he can by act or words? Not a hut he builds but is the visible embodiment of a Thought; but bears the visible record of invisible things."

To the ancient seer, when he looked at these things, the earth was not mere earth, nor man mere man. To him the earth had an inner meaning; there was a glory above the heavens; and an inner sanctuary in the soul of man where God dwelt. Everything he saw revealed to him something he could not see; the revealed became a symbol of the unrevealed. To thousands in more modern times the world is a symbol, and the things that are made and seen lead their minds through the outer veil to the inner reality—the spiritual reality that can only be discerned by Spirit. It is the quality of spirituality to recognise the symbolic character of the world, indeed of the universe and of man. It is a characteristic of the spiritual man that he is able through the symbol to commune with the Reality; he can enter behind the veil of the material universe and there find Spirit; behind the veil of history and recognise the Divine will and purpose, and behind the veil of human personality and in the inner sanctum find God. Such were Pythagoras and Plato, Jacob Boehme, Thomas á Kempis and Swedenborg with his great wealth of correspondence. Such too were Milton and Keats, Wordsworth and Coleridge, Browning and Tennyson, with an innumerable company of

others. Our Christian Bible is full of symbols—clouds and storms, the sea and the mountains, thunder and lightning, earthquakes and volcanoes, lions and eagles, the vine and the husbandman, sword and crown, seal and robe, bread and wine, water and light, the white stone, the palm, the dove, the anchor—all creation and all life is made to contribute some idea or conception of God and spiritual things. And yet even these symbols so suggestive, are but attempts to express the inexpressable, for after thunder and storm God is still the silent One, known yet unsearchable.

This is true of our beautiful Theosophical symbols—the Lotus, the moon, the serpent, triangle and others. H. P. B. in the *Secret Doctrine* has told us that "every symbol in papyrus or olla is a many-faced diamond, each of whose facets not merely bears several interpretations, but relates likewise to several sciences." And we are further told that to every symbol there are seven Keys, or that they may be turned seven times, corrsponding to all the septenaries in nature and in man. To look for some of the infinite interpretations that can be discovered in Theosophical symbols, such as the seal of the society, is not time wasted, nor time devoted to an artistic superstition. The *Secret Doctrine* seems to teach that these symbols are the formulæ of the laws, forces, and powers of nature and of mind. Let us begin with the serpent that forms the circle of the seal, that is, the serpent biting his tail. The serpent stands for wisdom. Legends and traditions from all over the world, from Egypt, and Chaldea, Mexico and Peru, ancient Britain and Scandinavia, as well as India, all inform us that the serpent was regarded with great reverence and was sacred to the God of Wisdom. It also stood for inspiration, and the Initiates of all ages have been called serpents. As the serpent is oviparous it was regarded by the ancients as a symbol of the Divinity which issues from the egg of space. The *Secret Doctrine* says, "The Spirit of God moving on chaos was symbolized by every nation in the shape of a fiery serpent breathing fire and light upon the primordial waters, until it made it assume the annular shape of a serpent with its tail in its mouth." Then too, the serpent sloughs his skin and so symbolizes the Ego that sheds its various bodies, or personalities, during its cycle of reincarnation. The same thing symbolizes rejuvenation and immortality. It also stands for time and duration, and with its tail in its mouth it symbolizes eternity. These are not one tenth of the things that the serpent symbolizes to the ancients. Bible readers will remember the brazen serpent lifted up by Moses in the wilderness to save the people who had been bitten by fiery serpents, so typifying the great Teacher, who by his power can heal those who have been bitten by the fiery serpent of the passions and Kamic nature. Students will also remember that, *The Voice of the Silence* speaks of Kundalini, one of the powers latent in man, as the "Serpentine or annular power," and says "it is an electric fiery occult or fohatic power, the great pristine force which underlies all organic and inorganic matter." The serpent, like all other

symbols, is a dual figure and it symbolizes both spirit and matter, good and evil. The circle made by the serpent with its tail in its mouth is one of the most ancient, most mysterious and universal of all symbols. It stands for the Aboslute, or Absoluteness, for space, the idea of which can never be eliminated from thought, never destroyed. The Serpent is not the circle, but assumes the form of a circle which symbolizes abstract space whose center is everywhere and its circumference nowhere. The absolute circle includes every idea of space and time, that is, duration or eternity, as it has no end and no beginning. The cycles or circles of time play an important part in all ancient systems and all astronomical calculations. The terms wheels, rings, rounds, and so forth, are all included in this symbol. The perfect type of space is also the type of the perfect or heavenly man. Plato has told us this and Egyptian hieroglyphics also testify to it. So we have the same figure for the Macrocosm, or great world, or universe, and for the Microcosm, or small world which is man—"As above, so below."

Let us now consider the interlaced triangles. The white triangle with its apex pointing upward symbolizes spirit in its three aspects; the three aspects of the Logos, three persons of the Trinity, in common language. It is the Everlasting Yea of Carlyle, the positive pole of the Universal Magnet. The darker triangle with its apex pointing downwards symbolizes matter, or prakriti. It is the negative pole of the Universal Magnet, the Everlasting *Nay* of *Sartor Resartus.* As the other represented the three aspects of the Logos, this lower triangle represents matters with its three qualities, the Gunams. The first is said to represent fire and this one water, yet the two are essentially one, the higher being reflected in the lower. The two are interlacing, which means that we knew nothing about spirit except as revealed through matter, and nothing of matter except as vivified by spirit. The student will find a great many more ideas symbolized by the triangles than I have mentioned here, and if interested in numbers will find a new world opening to him there.

The *crux ansata,* or handled cross is an ancient symbol of eternal life, immortality. We are told that "In ancient Egypt the initiated adept who had successfully passed all his trials was bound to a cross of this shape, upon which he remained for three days plunged in a deep and sacred trance, during which his higher principles, or Spiritual soul, were supposed to hold communion with the Gods." After three days, just as the sun rose, the cross was brought out of the crypt of the temple or pyramid and the glorified initiate brought back to earth life. In this connection the handle of the cross symbolizes the immortal, spiritual Ego. The dark crypt in which the crucified one was placed is the body. When we put to sleep the lower nature we shall be glorified by the awakening of the spiritual senses. There are many other things symbolized by this cross. There is another curious figure near the mouth of the serpent at the top of the circle, which is commonly known as the *Swastica.* In India it is

called the Wheel of Krishna, while in the west it is known as the Gnostic cross, and is identical with the wheels of Pythagoras and Ezekiel. It is also the Hammer of Thor, in Scandinavian mythology, the magic weapon forged by the Dwarfs in their war with the giants; that is, the forces of matter. The turning back of its ends denotes its revolution and is said to symbolize evolution and progress.

Looking at the symbol of the society as a whole it is most instructive. If we proceed from exterior to the interior we are really going from the interior to the exterior of things as manifesting the eternal idea, which suggests that the Theosophical method is from universals to particulars. First we have the serpent circle which, as a unity represents the one substance, the *Mother-Father* of the stanzas of the Book of Dzyan in the *Secret Doctrine*. This substance is not matter, but the one *Something,* which is for us pure thought. The whole process of creation, or evolution from this *Something* is portrayed in the figure. Perhaps most interesting of all is the fact that the seal includes and symbolises the three objects of the Society. It shows that the center of the universe is man—the intelligent and self-conscious center of the arc of evolution—so showing that all men are essentially one, thus giving us the first object of establishing a nucleus of universal brotherhood. Then as the seal unites in itself, in one symbol, the symbolism of all the great world religions, it shows their essential unity, which is the basis of Theosophy, the synthesis of all systems; showing the second object of the society, which is the study of comparative religions, sciences and philosophies.

In the third place, as the power of Cosmos, nature and man—of the Macrocosm and the Microcosm—are set forth in the symbolism of the serpent, so the third object of the Society is suggested—a study of the undiscovered laws of nature and the powers of man. Is it worth while thus to study symbolism? What good will it do? Let Thomas Carlyle answer for us, "In a symbol there is a concealment, and yet a revelation; here therefore by silence and by speech acting together, comes a double significance. And if both speech be itself high, and the silence fit and noble, how expressive will their union be! Thus in many a painted device, or simple Seal-emblem the commonest truth stands out to us proclaimed with quite new emphasis."

Now from Carlyle, let the Student turn to the *Secret Doctrine* and study carefully the sections on mystery language and symbolism and he may catch the spirit of the ancient seers and gather from earth and air and sun, the suggestions of a nobler, higher, and purer life. Every day in the great outer world he may find that which will quicken faith, enrich understanding, comfort the heart, and turn the whole world into a holy temple.

JOHN SCHOFIELD.

The Gleam, by Helen R. Albee, published by Henry Holt & Co., New York. This work might have as a sub-title, "The Story of a Soul," for it describes the inner life of the author, from earliest childhood, through storm and stress, trial, pain, happiness, success and failure, until, finally, a fair measure of real peace and understanding is attained. It is graphically, at times even dramatically written; is interesting from start to finish; and yet it is a difficult book to review. One can admire the author's purpose, unquestionably that of helping others in their struggles; one can sympathize with her experiences; one can and does agree in the main with her final conclusions; one can even accept as wise, and approve of many of her methods; and yet there are certain things about the book that make one question whether it will not do more harm than good. The reason for this is quite simple. Mrs. Albee traveled a dangerous road, and while she seems to have come through without obvious harm, it is quite certain that others without her special qualities of mind and heart would end in disaster if they tried to follow her path. She realizes this, inadequately, and in part, for she gives one or two gentle warnings to too eager disciples; but not having herself suffered from the mistaken methods she tried, or not being aware of the effects of these things on her own character and inner being, she gives the general impression to her readers that they could not do better than repeat her experiences if they wish to arrive at her goal. She herself would probably deny this and say that, quite the contrary, her main object in writing the book was to enable others to avoid the snags and pitfalls that she met, and surmount difficulties without going through the pain and suffering she experienced. But she forgets two things. One is that human beings will practically never take warning from the experiences of another. The second is that psychic phenomena have an almost irresistible attraction for most people, and they will run any theoretical risk and undergo any theoretical danger for the sake of having such experiences. So long as these things are so, it were better for the average human being to remain entirely ignorant of the possibility of cultivating psychism.

For instance, Mrs. Albee once tried to and succeeded in producing marked psychic effects by breathing exercises. She minutely describes the experiences and their psychical results, interesting and seemingly valuable, and ends with the brief statement that it is not advisable to try these things without guidance. Now the plain truth is that it is always exceedingly dangerous to try them with or without guidance, for they tend to induce consumption, insanity and other physical diseases and always produce serious disturbances in the psychic body. It would be much safer and better to take opium or hashish; for the value of the psychic experiences which result is quite as reliable and trustworthy in the one case as in the other, while the permanent results of opium are not so harmful, evil as they are.

Mrs. Albee also tried automatic writing and other purely mediumistic processes. Indeed, one of the most objectionable parts of her book is the generally mediumistic tendency of her advice. She does not realize that she had certain admirable qualities, a strength of will, a fixity of purpose, a fundamental sanity, which

carried her safely through experiences which would land most people in a quagmire of evil, physical, mental moral and spiritual. In other words, although Mrs. Albee has learned much during a most interesting life, and has passed through a great variety of typical experiences, she does not know enough to write this kind of a guide for others. It is not necessary for soul growth that we should operate the planchette, or indulge in automatic writing, and because she did so with no known harmful after effects is no reason why others should try experiments which are known to be exceedingly dangerous. Psychism is alluring and this book shows such things at their best; shows them as they can be only when they operate through a person as pure, as well-intentioned, as strong and sane as Mrs. Albee. There is the danger. She was an unusual person with unusual qualities, and the average person who reads her book and who seeks to repeat her experiences, would be subjecting himself to grave dangers, all the more serious because not understood and perhaps not even believed in.

Before leaving the ungrateful and ungracious task of fault-finding, there are two more things we must mention. One, the most repellant in the book, is the matter-of-fact way in which she will use spiritual power to produce material objects and results. She does not hesitate to furnish her house by a conscious command upon the spiritual world for a rug or a rocking chair! She does not seem to realize how absolutely shocking this prostitution of her power really is; and that saves her from what, to give it its real name, is nothing more nor less than outright black magic.

The remaining fault is the old one of curing physical disease by the use of spiritual power. Most people seem to think it right because it can be done. Their difficulty is in believing it possible, not in its morality or immorality. Mrs. Albee can see and she points out the fallacy in the philosophical position of the Christian Scientists, and she is blind to the immorality of her own practices, just as she seems entirely free from any doubt about the propriety of calling down from Heaven the particular kind of teapot needed to supplement her table furniture. Indeed, we despair of convincing people of the fundamental danger of these practices until they know enough to see for themselves that all they do is to escape an immediate and apparent disease, at the cost of a much more dangerous and painful inner trouble. It may be the same disease in an aggravated form later on, or it may take the shape of serious defeat in the moral nature, or still again, a distorted and deformed body in some future incarnation. What is certain is that the present expression of any disease is the easiest and simplest way in which nature can discharge from the system the poison which is there. It is at our peril that we disturb the natural process and stop its expression. We do not and we cannot eliminate the actual poison. The whole mighty power of the universe would have to be violated before we could do that. Barring a certain lack of sympathy for and understanding of orthodox religions, and their usual expression, this is all we have to say in criticism.

Turning now to the merits of the book, it is a pleasure to bear testimony to the splendid manner in which Mrs. Albee has learned many lessons which we are all endeavoring to learn. We can give unstinted admiration to her courage, her fine will, her endurance, her mental honesty and to many another quality of mind and heart. Above all, her love of nature and the keenness of her powers of observing it, and the beautiful manner in which she uses natural objects and natural phenomena to illustrate some subtle psychological problem, excite our admiring envy. It seems hardly necessary to say that when such a character, endowed with so many rich gifts of mind and heart, filled with an intense desire for steady improvement, seeking the underlying causes for things and events, tells her story, she tells many, many things which are inspiring and helpful.

Her whole idea of life as a school in which the soul learns its lessons by

carrying on a perpetual warfare against circumstances and things, is in accord with our philosophy. Her ideas about its discipline and training, and the way in which this discipline and training come, seem to us eminently correct and sane. Her ideals are high; almost the highest, and she gives us the impression of having read much more Theosophy than she acknowledges. Some of our books she must have read, for she uses whole sentences from them, as for instance *Light on the Path,* which may well be the little book which led to her awakening, but whose name she does not give. Indeed, one can say quite truthfully that all that is best in the book is pure Theosophy and that it is only when she departs from Theosophical teaching that we begin to doubt the wisdom of her methods or her conclusions. This is not because we believe Theosophy to be the only expression of truth, for we do not. It is because Mrs. Albee approaches life from the Theosophical standpoint, but lacks thorough knowledge of its teachings and when she diverges from it, she does not improve her position.

She believes in reincarnation and refers to it, but not directly by name. Her book ends with a sort of appeal to her readers to believe in the existence of Masters, again without using the name. Her psychological explanations are at times profound and penetrating, and would be helped if she had at her command a larger vocabulary and a better classification of human principles. It is here that the English language fails us. Her analysis of mental processes, of the mere activity of the brain, and the distinction between it and the consciousness back of it, is admirable, and unlike most Western writers, she knows the difference between meditation, contemplation and prayer. She knows these things by personal experience, and not by study, and that makes her presentation of them all the more vivid and enlightening. She has much, but not too much to say about concentration, its difficulty, and its absolute necessity.

Indeed, we do not see how any sincere minded person, with a desire to go forward along the Path of life and Immortality, and who knows enough to avoid the subtle pitfall of psychism, could fail to get help and inspiration from the reading of this book; and that makes it all the more distasteful to end our notice of it by repeating the warning that its defects as a spiritual guide, are serious, because it tends to glorify psychic experiences and put them in the place of spiritual experiences which are much more rare and difficult of attainment. The psychic nature can be artificially developed, and Mrs. Albee so cultivated hers. The spiritual nature cannot be, and spiritual experiences will never happen save to those who have earned them by hard and faithful work along the time honored path of self-conquest and renunciation. Needless to say the book is Vedantic in its approach to the problems of life, and there will be many who will miss the personal note which exists in the religion of Christ. Will it be amiss to say to these that this is only a difference in method and not in essence? Exactly the same experiences can be lived through and the same lessons learned in terms of the Christian religion, if that is a more sympathetic or customary means of approach; as it will be to most of the people who will read this most interesting and unusual book.

C. A. G., Jr.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION 130.—*"Does not the theosophical philosophy contradict the modern theories about the rights of man?"*

ANSWER.—Yes, without doubt Theosophy demonstrates that man has no rights, and the more one studies Theosophy the more fallacious appears the easy rhetoric of the Preamble to the American Constitution, which attempts to define these rights. Who gave man any rights? Who could give him rights?

A little reflection will show, I think, that only God can confer rights, and so far as I know, he not only never has conferred any on man, but every sacred scripture, of every race and time, has laid all its emphasis on just the opposite side of the question—has insisted that what God wants is the surrender of absolutely everything which man considers a right.

The Preamble speaks of the "right" of every man to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and yet the Constitution provides the machinery whereby he may be deprived of life, liberty and the opportunity to pursue happiness.

We are a queer people, much given to delusions, and I know of none more universal and few more pernicious than this Western theory about rights. For it is a Western theory. A number of Hindu chêlas were being taught something about Western civilization, not so long ago, and they came across this question of people's rights. After puzzling over it for some time, one of them asked the teacher, "What are rights? Is it some new kind of Western sin?"

The trouble is that it goes so deep. Take children, for instance. There is much talk nowadays, about the average American child, about his bad manners, his lack of deference and respect for his parents, his general low taste. I believe the reason to be that our minds have become so perverted by this idea of "rights," that it has affected our ideals of education, of discipline and of the proper way to bring up children. Indeed, we hear much about the rights of children, their right to the free play of their individualities, and other nonsense like that. I know one fond parent who is so bitten by this modern craze that she lets her children eat whatever they want. I cannot imagine any way of corrupting a human being more efficient and more far reaching than to be brought up by a modern exponent of the "rights" of the individual to his own life and to the free expression of his nature.

Now what is the fundamental principle which governs this question? It seems to me to be simple. The whole of life provides the discipline needed for the conquest of self; for its conquest, its control, its suppression, if necessary; not in any way whatever for its free expression. In due time we shall hope to express freely the developed soul, but that time is far off for all of us, and in the meanwhile, the fewer opportunities we have for the full and free expression of our personalities, the better. We shall have that much less to overcome. I believe, therefore, that the whole spirit and genius of our modern, and particularly our American life, is really contrary to what it should be, and must be, before we can hope that the race as a whole will progress and not degenerate. No wonder the

sociological writer notes a spirit of lawlessness in our people; no wonder that we have been warned that license is not liberty; no wonder that our children are famous all over the world for their disagreeable and unadmirable qualities, so that in a foreign hotel, an American child is considered an unmitigated nuisance. How could these things be otherwise?

No wonder that all over the Western world, the snake of socialism has raised its crest, and that the whole social body is in a feverish delirium from its poison,—rending itself in internal strife, and arraying class against class in the unrestrained struggle, through strikes, lockouts, boycotts and even wholesale murder, to gain or hold their fancied and so-called "rights."

Face to face with death,—in times of plague or war or famine—a man knows that he would be grateful to be allowed to live at all. But in times of ease this knowledge passes from him. Then someone tells him he has "the right" to live—that the "world owes him a living." He may try to put this theory into practice, and, taking what the world seems unwilling to give, get a living, but in jail. But even if its crudest applications be rejected, once the idea of inherent rights finds lodgment in the mind it grows beyond all limits. The right to live becomes the right to live in comfort,—the right to all one desires and can get by force or strategem. The workman's wage must be a "living wage" no matter how poor and dead the work. And the right to a living wage becomes the right to a wage which will support him in comfort. Then he wants the law to recognize that "right," and his "right" to leisure, and to have it forbid longer hours of labour or a less rate of wages. In England, to-day, he sets the minimum at $10 a week. But if he feels he has the "right" to $10 a week, and can get it by legislation, he will not think his rights stop there. Why not $15 a week or $50 or $500? Why put any limit? There are no limits to the magnitude of our "rights," if we possess even the smallest. Truly we people of the West are laying up an extraordinary Karma for ourselves in this preaching of rights, and when the bubble bursts there will come a hard awakening.

The plain fact is that no one of us has any "rights" at all,—not even to life itself. Life is a privilege, a gift from the gods, and we would be wise to be grateful for it,—grateful for the opportunity to work like galley slaves for mere existence, if those were the only terms upon which we could get it. G. Hijo.

Answer.—The theosophical philosophy does not contradict modern theories about the rights of man if those theories are really understood. Everything appears to have at least two aspects or lines of approach, and the other side of the *rights of man* is the *obligations of man.* The right of every child born into the world to care and nourishment during its early years, approached from the other side is the obligation of the child's parents to provide those things. The right of every member of society to a limited measure of freedom and protection is the obligation of the State to ensure that freedom and protection and the obligation of every other member of society not in any way to interfere with it. The right of the laboring man to a living wage is the obligation of his employer to make possible that living wage, even at the sacrifice of his own superfluous comfort.

Socialism looked at from this viewpoint presents an unusual and altogether spiritual aspect. Instead of the masses clamouring for their rights and threatening the unearned or extortionate gains of the captains of industry, the situation is reversed: These captains of industry, realizing the debt they themselves owe to the democratic principle and feeling the obligation to protect and extend that principle, pour back their surplus incomes into the common fund, or, better still, stay their hands in the early days of their successes from the "sharp" or dishonest policy to protect a weaker neighbor and leave him in independence to acquire

his share of the gains. This is the spirit of socialism from the capitalists' standpoint. It has apparently the hallmarks of the theosophical philosophy—brotherly love and self-sacrifice.

If the maxim, "Thy right is to the work but never to its fruits" applies to the laboring man who clamours for his "rights," it applies with even greater insistence to the capitalist who builds a wall around his "privileges."

Standards vary with different stages of spiritual progress or different periods of evolution. Struggle for life, independence, "rights," egoism—are right at a certain point. When a man has gained these "rights" and learned what he can from those experiences he comes under the sway of a higher law—the struggle for the lives of others—altruism. This is no mere sentimental theorizing; it is a plain statement of fact, and every member of the human race who has earned the right to know, knows it to be a fact. If it could be shown that the "masses" were in the earlier stage of development and the "classes" in the later and more matured stage extremes would meet, and our social problems would be solved in the winking of an eye. Would to God they might be so solved.

L. E. P.

ANSWER.—Before attempting to answer this question on the rights of man, it was my privilege to see the two answers which had been previously received and which appear herewith. They interested me greatly,—more, I confess, than the question itself,—and as I read them I began to wonder whether the majority of readers would not fall between the two stools set for their accommodation. The more I reflected the more it seemed to me that they would eye each a little askance, and remain standing where they were before. Neither stool seems exactly suited to the restful occupancy of the mere-ordinary-person's common thought. We admire uncompromising rigidity,—but we think it might soon become uncomfortable; that stool has no back. We marvel at the mental suppleness which can twist itself around and repose upon contradictory opposites, facing two ways at once. We marvel, but we know we cannot imitate; that stool, also, is not for us. On the whole we prefer to stand where we are.

But where are we standing? There the original question repeated itself, and it seemed to me there was need for a third answer which would not presuppose such an unusual moral or mental equipment in the reader as are respectively assumed in the answers of G. Hijo and L. E. P. As a mere-ordinary-person, I felt myself admirably qualified for the task of writing it.

But now that I have undertaken it, the task looms larger than it did at first. I wonder whether the mere-ordinary-person is safe to approach this subject at all. I wonder whether the readers of the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY *are* mere-ordinary-persons. I wonder whether G. Hijo's attitude, rigid and uncompromising as it is, may not be the only safe one, even if it does look uncomfortable. I wonder, particularly, whether we do not make a mistake to assume that an attitude will be uncomfortable before we have tried it. Perhaps we have a stronger backbone than we imagine.

What is it we mean when we speak of the "rights of man"? I fancy that we do not need to look very deeply into our thought about our "rights" in order to see that when we use that term we are almost always talking and thinking about something we deem to be a "right" of the personality. We very rarely say: It is my right to be courageous, honourable, self-sacrificing in my duty. We do very frequently say, or think: It is my right to protect myself, to get a little rest, to take some enjoyment. We are rather careless in our thought of the rights of the soul, as rights, but the "rights" of the personality we are inclined to insist upon as such. The reason for this is simple. We think about rights, as rights, only when they are questioned,—when the horrid doubt comes into our

minds as to whether some possession or power we have enjoyed or desired is not to be taken from us. No one can take from us the powers and possessions of the soul. Neither man nor circumstance can prevent our being courageous, honourable, and self-sacrificing. But both men and circumstances are forever endangering our safety and robbing us of ease and pleasure. And because we want these things we cry out against the danger and the robbery. We say we have a right to them,—a just claim which ought to prevail and which we purpose to enforce against all comers.

Now here we are face to face with a pretty complete self-contradiction in our conception of "rights" when we regard them as attaching to the personality. Certainly part of our conception of a right is that it is something which is inherently ours, which cannot in justice be denied us. If we felt it could be justly denied us, we would be forced to recognize it as a privilege and not a right. Yet we have just seen that what we desire to claim as the rights of the personality are precisely those things which are most commonly denied us, and which are forever being threatened. Indeed it is not stretching the paradox to say that it is precisely because the gratification of our personal desires does not seem to us included, as an inalienable possession, in the existing scheme of things, that we are led to claim it as a right; precisely because we realize that our tenure in the goods of the personality is in fact so insecure, is the reason why we cry out that they should be secured to us. We are forced to the conclusion that either the existing scheme of things is fundamentally and continuously unjust, robbing us of what is inherently ours; or else that these goods of the personality are not inherently ours, and that our thought that we have just title to them is a delusion bred from our desire.

Upon this point the study of theosophy throws much light. The doctrine of Karma is as complete a denial of the fancied injustice of life as it would be possible to imagine, and the delusive glamour which arises from Kama-Manas (the brain under the influence of desire) has been exposed and analyzed in a hundred ways. There can be no doubt to which horn of the dilemma the theosophist is forced. In his thought the personality can have no rights, for the very simple reason that the universe as it is does not recognize them. Willy, nilly, we find ourselves sitting on the stool G. Hijo offered us.

But before we are content to remain there we are tempted to glance at one other aspect of the common thought on personal rights. Almost always what we call a right is something we claim for ourselves as against others. Most of us are not so much inclined to rail against the universe as against our fellows. We say that probably the universe is just enough, but we are quite convinced that John Smith is not. We are inclined to forget that John Smith is part of the universe. We stand on the corner waiting for the omnibus, and the policeman tells us to "move on." We grow indignant and say we "have a right" to stay where we are. If he moves us on we are a hundred times more indignant and consider that our rights have been grossly violated. If we were standing on the same corner and a sudden cyclone blew us down the street, we should not think of appealing to our rights. We would know the futility of it,—and the folly. Yet in fact the universe "moved us on" just as much in the one case as the other. There is no "right" of the personality which the universe respects, least of all the so-called right to life, and, as we reflect upon this, we begin to think that perhaps after all our idea of our rights did not attach itself to the things we claimed,—to this or that possession or power which we desired,—as much as to our feeling of what was due us from others, to a standard of conduct to which we felt others should conform. Surely, we tell ourselves, we "have a right" to expect, and to demand, decency and justice and fairplay from those about us. And this, we add with some heat, is all we ever asked; if we had been given that we could have had all we wanted.

With this we leap up from our stool, and find ourselves back where we started from, still standing on "our rights," and with the renewed sense that we have been badly treated. We have, however, considerably limbered up our mental joints and we begin to believe that, after all, we may be able to twist ourselves into L. E. P.'s attitude. Perhaps it is not so hopelessly upside down and facing all ways at once as it appeared. We have, we are told, only correctly to understand the modern theories about the rights of man, to see that they are in harmony with the teachings of theosophy and possess its hall-marks of brotherly love and self-sacrifice. We become even more anxious than before to obtain such a correct understanding,—which will permit us at one and the same time to insist upon our rights, to retain our sense of ill usage from the powers that be, and still to feel ourselves animated by the high motives of brotherly love and self-sacrifice. We perceive that this correct understanding consists in taking everything in a sense exactly the reverse from its ordinary significance. When we talk about the "rights of man" we have only to look at its reverse, "the obligations of man." We are better prepared to do this now than we were at the outset; for now we have about persuaded ourselves that all we asked in demanding "our rights" was that other people should fulfil their "obligations." Surely it is a good and high thing, and altogether in accord with the theosophical philosophy, that man should fulfil his obligations and show love and kindliness and generous self-sacrificing helpfulness to all about him. That, we exclaim, is what we were after all the time in insisting upon our "rights." If our rights were but granted us that is what we,—they,—

Here, somehow, something goes wrong when we had all but accomplished the attitude we sought. If our rights were gained it would be the rest of the world not ourselves who would be all these charming and high-souled people. We look in vain for our share in the generous self-sacrifice. Moreover, if they yielded our "rights" through our compulsion in insisting upon them, would they really be so loving and kind and generous as we were imagining? Just what part does the doctrine of man's rights play in this Utopian picture of the fulfilment of man's obligations? Something is very wrong indeed.

It takes small thought to see what that something is. It is the hypocrisy, none the less real and poisonous because often unconscious, of masking the self-seeking of the personality under the cloak of high-flown sentiments of brotherhood and justice,—which others are to practise. "The rights of man" have truly for their reverse "the obligations of man,"—as evil has for its reverse good. But to attribute to the one the good of the other is to do worse than to attribute to the darkness of night the light of day. It is to attribute to the flames of hell the light of heaven.

No, we cannot take L. E. P.'s attitude; and we begin to doubt whether it was ever really taken by L. E. P. or by any one else. We suspect it of being just a fancied pose, as we can draw ourselves in postures we could never possibly assume. We have to come back to reality and face things as they are, not as we would like to fancy them.

And when we do come back to reality we find ourselves again on G. Hijo's stool. The plain and simple fact is that as personalities, isolated and separated from other personalities, we can have no rights and no possessions. All religions, all clear thinking, speak here with one voice; and in the whole field of the theosophical philosophy there is no other point upon which the teaching is more explicit or more clear. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal." This is of the very essence of all things personal. In them can be no permanency of possession, no right not doomed to be denied and violated. We must "desire possessions above all. But those possessions must belong to the pure soul only, and be possessed therefore by all pure souls equally." It is the soul only that can possess

anything at all, or in which any right can inhere. There "neither moth nor rust doth corrupt," there "thieves do not break through nor steal." There is no power in the universe that can rob the soul, none, save the man's own will, that does not respect its rights; for these rights, like its possessions, are "the special property of the whole only, when united."

If we would but look a little deeper into life, as theosophy helps us sometimes to do, we would see the personality as it is,—not as the man himself, but as "that thing which he has with pain created for his own use and by means of which he purposes, as his growth slowly develops his intelligence, to reach to the life beyond individuality. When he knows that for this his wonderful complex, separated life exists, then, indeed, and then only he is upon the way." Could we once see this clearly and remember it,—and remember, too, that "all steps are necessary to make up the ladder," pain and loss and failure, quite as much as the aroma of virtue and success,—then we would no longer be troubled with this question of "the rights of man," but would know that in the denial of the right of the personality the right of the soul is claimed. H. B. M

ANSWER.—Deep in the consciousness of every man lives a realisation that he has rights, rights that are a part of his being. What are they? Where did they come from? They are, it seems to me, direct powers or privileges given to man by the Creator, when he was placed in this ordered universe and started on his evolution. All of them are spiritual rights and all are essential factors in that supreme right of man, the right to recognise the Master and to become like Him

This direct privilege of becoming courageous, pure, loving, irresistibly glad, divinely patient, triumphantly obedient, we have consistently neglected or debased. But for the power that clings in it, this our goodly right and heritage would long since have departed from us. Even the common law of the land recognises that only those rights which are used may be maintained.

So far from entering into our heritage, we try to exchange it for a mess of pottage. Misled by dislike of the hardships that mould character and drunken with lust for a life of ease and sensation, we debase this spiritual right *to be* and *to become,* by our endeavor to transform it into a right *to grasp* and to gain *material things.* So transformed, it falls from our hands. The compassionate law will not permit us to retain that which we have poisoned; and still we struggle to hold it fast. No wonder that the whole world is throbbing with an economic unrest. There can be no permanent solution of the world-problem or of the individual's problem until we claim our supreme right—to know the great love of the Master for us, and to help this love to grow in the hearts of our fellow men. K. D. P.

T·S·ACTIVITIES

THE CONVENTION OF THE UNITED GERMAN BRANCHES

Our Convention took place in Dresden, on May 13th and 14th, and was pronounced by all present a very successful event. Paul Raatz, Secretary, called attention to the fact that this Convention was the first one held since we gave up our national name and that the year just passed had brought no regret that this step had been taken. Each member and each branch has acquired inner strength by the direct connection with the Theosophical Society.

A public meeting opened the activities of the Convention, attended by a good-sized audience, who showed deep interest in the two lectures delivered by Kurt Uhlig on the subject: "Nature as a manifestation of Divine Thought" and by Sandor Weiss on the "Problem of Christ."

The business meeting took place Sunday morning, May 14th, and was attended by forty-eight persons, of whom twenty-nine were delegates from the German branches. The reading of the letters of greeting from Mr. Johnston, Dr. Keightley, Jasper Niemand, Mrs. Graves, Mrs. Bagnell, Colonel Knoff, Franz Lang and many members unable to be present, formed an interesting part of the proceedings.

The report of the Secretary showed that our "Union" has eight German branches with a membership of 232. During the past year twenty-eight new members have been admitted. The Correspondence Class, with Leopold Corvinus as secretary, has been active, the branches exchanging letters with each other and with other countries, especially with England. Each branch sent an enthusiastic report of its work, showing the deepest devotion and zeal.

An interesting and instructive part of the proceedings proved to be the lecture given by Paul Raatz on "Methods of Branch Work." He laid stress on the principle of *unity* which must prevail in each branch, each member identifying himself with the whole and devoting himself to *service* for the whole. To do this a branch must do *inner* and *outer* work; inner work by strengthening the feeling of solidarity among the members, by study, by exchange of thought and experience; outer work by being active for the place in which the branch is located. The principle to be followed in outer work should be: *interest* in the spiritual awakening of all who visit the meetings, especially those who are not members. The choice of subjects should not, therefore, be too narrowly restricted.

Practical work in the branches should also be of two kinds: positive and negative—positive work by strengthening the basic idea of the Theosophical Society, *Universal Brotherhood,* and negative work by correcting false impressions among outsiders, in respect to the aims and work of the Theosophical Society.

One branch has had good experience in introducing into its programme lectures delivered by outsiders, followed by a discussion, emphasizing points of agreement and theosophical principles. Members have also visited lectures held by other societies and joined in the discussion.

A social meeting was held on Sunday evening and a large number of members and guests enjoyed the hospitality of the Dresden branch in its "Home."

M. R. SCHILDBACH, *Secretary to the Convention.*